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BY NINO BOSAZ

Staying PowAR

"What's trending in the AR market these days?"

That's what a web wonk asked me during a recent editorial roundtable discussion. The term "trending" as it applies to the world-wide web rubs me the wrong way. Call me old-fashioned, but, to me, trending relates to topics that people are "clicking on" for the time being. There's a negative connotation in my conservative, traditionalist mind. It's as if the trending topic or thing is winning some sort of online popularity contest. And as history shows us here in American pop culture and media, our nation tends to place popular people or things on a pedestal only to eventually take great joy in knocking it off for the next big trend. Trends are often short-lived brushes with fame and fortune.



This issue is packed with several entry-level ARs, including the new FN 15 1776 from FNH USA, an everyman's rifle ready to go right out of the box for $899.

Are AR-platform rifles trending? It's more like AR-platform rifles are kicking ass and taking names! Today's ARs, and all of their aftermarket add-ons, can only be classified as having the utmost in staying power. The AR design has been growing strong for decades, with technological and engineering breakthroughs that have made the AR platform even more capable than former Marine and Army Ordnance technician Eugene Stoner ever could've imagined. According to Armalite's history literature, "In 1954, Armalite was established as a division of Fairchild Engine and Airplane Corporation. The AR-1 (bolt-action Parasniper) was one of the first rifles produced at Armalite's location in Hollywood, California, and paved the way to the development of the AR-10."

So Stoner's AR-10, a 7.25-pound, select-fire infantry rifle chambered in 7.62x51mm NATO was really the one that started it all. Truth be told, Armalite's AR-10 may have been adopted by the U.S. military had it not arrived late to the Army's Aberdeen Proving Ground in 1956. All was not lost, though, because shortly after, a scaled-down version of the AR-10 became the AR-15 in 5.56mm and adopted as the M16 by the U.S. military.

Why all this backstory? Well, because history often repeats itself, and in the case of AR-platform rifles, this is a very good thing. Today's gun-makers and engineers are taking all the great things about Stoner's original AR-10 design and making them better.

This issue is packed with more next-gen, big-bore rifles than ever before. Take our two cover guns for instance. Remington's R-25 GII is billed as the lightest .308 on the market today. And Windham Weaponry's .308 Hunter, with its beautiful laminate stock, is nothing short of one sweet looker and shooter! Looking for a 6.5 Grendel to make fast work of whitetails in your neck of the woods? Alexander Arms' Tactical Fluted Rifle might just be your ticket. Plus you can hit the .308 trifecta with Lancer's carbon-fiber-handguarded L30 series. Nope, carbon fiber was not around in Stoner's day and age.

Before diving into all of the 5.56mm NATO rifle reviews, be sure to check out the LAR-47 from Rock River Arms, an AK/AR hybrid chambered in 7.62x39mm. And don't miss a wild hog-stalking adventure with a Wilson Combat rifle in .458 SOCOM.

For predator popping, competition and self-defense work, we've tested two great entry-level ARs with rifleman-friendly price tags: Ruger's new AR-556 and FNH USA's FN 15 1776. Plus, the weather report from Dark Storm Industries shows there's a Typhoon brewing; Bravo has a new KeyMod Alpha dog on the block; Lewis Machine & Tool has a slick new shooter; and Midwest Industries' Minute Man has stepped up for duty.

We've also compiled the most comprehensive AR buyer's guide. Rails, grips, stocks, suppressors, sights, optics and ammo are in store. No doubt, if Eugene Stoner were still around to accessorize his rifles, he would revel in the versatility of his steadfast design.

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FN 15 1776



LET FREEDOM RING! It's time to hammer steel with FNH USA's latest entry-level AR.

BY D.K. PRIDGEN • **PHOTOS** BY STEVE WOODS

FOR OVER 125 YEARS, the name *Fabrique Nationale* has been associated with firearms for hunting, competition, self-defense and war. For a long time, hearing "FN" brought visions of FAL rifles and Hi-Power pistols to my mind, despite the company's continued innovations and production of more modern firearms, many of which are currently in use with the U.S. military. In 1989, FN won the contract to produce the M16, and American's younger generations were given their own mental image for FN.

Of course, FN has realized that AR-platform modern sporting rifles (MSRs) are inarguably the hottest sellers in the country. There are a lot of the black guns being manufactured, but many are priced beyond the budget of many enthusiasts and potential shooters. Quite a few manufacturers have tackled the price difficulties by adding a line of "value-driven" ARs. These usually do not incorporate all the extras of the more expensive AR-style rifles but still retain similar quality and workmanship.

In many minds, an MSR has to cost a lot to be worth its salt. Sure, entry-level ARs may be missing specialty, non-budget AR items. But a well-assembled carbine using properly specified parts of the correct materials will yield exactly what is expected—a hunting, competition or defensive rifle that will work when needed.

FN understands the desire so many have to own an MSR, the descendant of a weapon that received its baptism of fire in Vietnam in the 1960s and remains the U.S. military's weapon today. For over a quarter of a century, FN has been providing ARs to our military—proof the company knows how to produce guns that shoot every single time. As you probably know, military use demands "life on the line" reliability and performance.

"The fact is that the FN 15 1776 is a great way to start off as an AR owner. It is optics ready, built on a solid platform, and can easily be modified as the consumer wants."

FNH USA's new FN 15 1776 is an affordable, do-it-all 5.56mm carbine made for every American to get into the AR shooting world. Just add an optic and ammuntion and you're ready to go. Shown with a Lancer AWM magazine and Burris' AR-1X sight and AR-Tripler.



FNH USA uses its many years of rifle-making experience to build the FN 15 1776, a mil-spec-style carbine with traditional AR controls and furniture.

SPECIFICATIONS

FN 15 1776

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32-35.2 inches
WEIGHT:	6.6 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$899

FNs FOR ALL

Recently, FNH USA introduced a new line of high-quality ARs at affordable prices. The FN 15 series began with two variants but now includes seven models for discerning shooters. Each model has specific features that set it apart. The FN 15 Rifle, for example, features a fixed stock, a traditional polymer forend, a flattop upper, an A2-style carry handle/rear sight, an A2-style front sight and a 20-inch barrel. The FN 15 MOE SLG has a 16-inch barrel and gray Magpul SL furniture as well as a Magpul MBUS rear sight to match the A2-style front sight. The FN 15 Tactical also uses a 16-inch barrel but sports a Magpul MOE grip, a Magpul SL stock, Magpul MBUS front and rear sights and a 12-inch Midwest Industries M-LOK handguard.

There are two 18-inch-barreled carbines that come with Timney competition triggers: the 5.56mm FN 15 DMR, with its 15-inch Midwest Industries SSM M-LOK handguard and Magpul STR stock, MOE grip and MBUS Pro sights, and the FN 15 Sporting chambered in .223 Remington, which includes a match-grade barrel and a 15-inch Samson Evolution handguard.

Finally, you have the mil-spec FN 15 Carbine and the newest addition to the lineup, the FN 15 1776. A removable carry handle/rear sight rides atop the flattop upper receiver of the FN 15 Carbine, and the lower receiver is equipped with a six-position-collapsible buttstock. The 16-inch barrel is surrounded by a traditional two-piece polymer handguard.

But now let's talk about the FN 15 1776, which I recently got a chance to test.

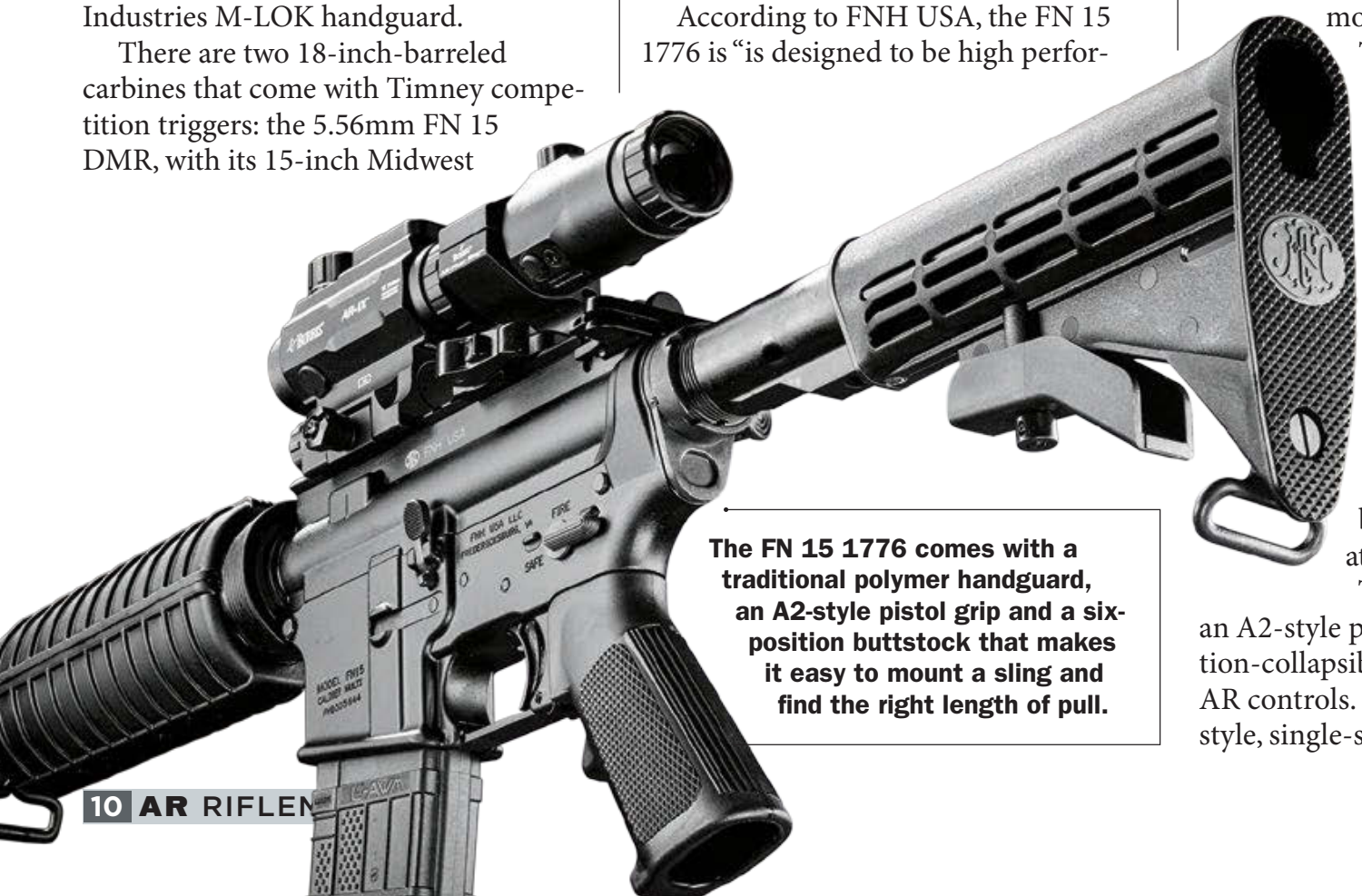
PATRIOT'S RIFLE

According to FNH USA, the FN 15 1776 is "is designed to be high performance, value-priced and optics ready, perfect for shooters looking for a base rifle to customize to their liking."

The FN 15 1776 starts with a 16-inch, alloy steel, button-broached, government-profile barrel with a 1-in-7-inch twist rate, a 5.56mm NATO chamber and M4 feed ramps. An A2-style flash suppressor caps the muzzle, and surrounding the gas system and barrel is a traditional polymer handguard. The upper has a Picatinny rail on top for mounting sights and optics.

The FN 15 1776 ships without sights in keeping with the "optics ready" format. With just the flattop rail, it wouldn't be very effective to add front and rear sights so close together. Of course, offset sights from XS Sights, Dueck Defense, Diamondhead, GG&G and others should be able to be work if you're dead set on having backup sights because of their immediate-range intent.

The lower receiver features an A2-style pistol grip, a six-position-collapsible buttstock and traditional AR controls. The trigger is a mil-spec-style, single-stage unit, and my test rifle's



The FN 15 1776 comes with a traditional polymer handguard, an A2-style pistol grip and a six-position buttstock that makes it easy to mount a sling and find the right length of pull.

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trigger broke at 7.4 pounds on average with a little grittiness. The receivers are hardcoat anodized black, and the rifle ships with a 30-round Magpul Gen 3 PMAG.

BORN TO SHOOT

To test the FN 15 1776 on the range, I added an EOTech XPS3 holographic weapon sight. It slid on and worked perfectly. As expected, since the FN 15 1776 is made by a company that has produced countless numbers of ARs for the U.S. military and others, the rifle ran flawlessly through the exercises I usually work carbines through. Close and far, from 7 yards out to 75, the FN 15 1776 purred right along. I ran the carbine with polymer and metal magazines from several manufacturers with no effect on the FN 15 1776's performance. The rifle's light weight made it easy to handle, and it quickly transitioned between targets.

Moving to the 100-yard range, I decided to forego using a scope and see just how well my eyes, the EOTech XPS3 and the FN 15 1776 carbine would work together to product five-shot groups. Quite a few rounds later, I had a number of targets on hand with .22-caliber holes bunched together in small groups. It seemed the XPS3 and the FN 15 1776 were a pretty good team.

At 100 yards, the groups averaged around 2.1 inches from the bench. Experience has shown that I can usually shoot groups around 3 inches or smaller with a good 1X red dot. That kind of accuracy usually translates to 1- or 1.5-inch groups with a nice scope with descent magnification. I expect that the FN 15 1776, despite not being billed as a target rifle, would be able to drop five shots into groups less than 1 inch with the right optic. Not too bad!

PROVEN PERFORMER

The range time proved that the FN 15 1776 was quite capable of self-defense or competition accuracy, and more. Its reliability proves it is qualified for use in dangerous situations. Are there any things I'd like to see FNH USA change? No, not really. As a belt-and-suspender kind of guy, however, if it were mine I would probably add offset sights.

Of course, that's just a personal preference. The fact is that the FN 15 1776 is a great way to start off as an AR owner. It is optics ready, built on a solid platform, and can easily be modified as the consumer wants. Bottom line: After you add an optic, the FN 15 1776 is ready to go.

When FNH USA advertised the FN 15 1776 as being "designed to be high performance, value-priced and optics ready, perfect for shooters looking for a base rifle to customize to their liking," the company was not blowing smoke! I have no qualms about using or recommending this rifle. For more information, visit fnhusa.com or call 703-288-3500.

PERFORMANCE

FN 15 1776

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Federal 55 Tactical SP	2,792	2.35
Hornady 62 Barrier TAP	2,803	2.11
Wilson Combat 77 Match HPBT	2,551	1.99

NOTE: Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

Getting Entry-Level AR Shooters Started

We're not gaining any ground with the recruitment of hunters, and every new firearm owner only adds to the ranks for the eventual fight to protect Second Amendment rights looming in some future court. Do you want to inspire a youth shooter who has shown an interest in black guns? Introduce them to the AR. I guarantee that you'll make them a shooter for life.

We actually have an opportunity, as parents now, that wasn't present when most of us were growing up. We can introduce youth hunters to the shooting sports with some of the "coolest" weaponry on the market today. BB guns aside, I'm not sure of the first firearm I actually pulled the trigger on. It was either a single-shot .22 LR or a single-shot .410. Today, those firearms still hold a place in my heart, but I can't imagine going to the range with my father or grandpa and having them pull a black AR-15 out of the gun case for a supervised introduction into shooting. I would have thought Arnold Schwarzenegger himself was about to step from behind the truck and hand me a fresh magazine.



WORK IN THE AR: I understand you can't just turn an AR-style firearm over to a new shooter, especially a youngster, but you can introduce them to shooting and include an AR in the mix for inspiration. Single-shots serve a purpose in understanding the workings and safety of a firearm, but let's not be old fashioned. Kids feed off the energy and lightning speed of video games. If you want to compete, you had better include an AR at some point in a youth range outing.

FIRST SHOTS: For Christmas last year, my 14-year-old son only asked for one item: an AR. He's a straight-A student, a responsible shooter, a solo hunter (legal in Wyoming at 14) and on his way to becoming an Eagle Scout. How could we turn down his request? His wish list contained a Smith & Wesson M&P15 equipped with a Magpul stock. Wanting a firearm for possible competitive shooting and varmint hunting, he ordered a Nikon P-223 3x32mm riflescope along with the P-Series two-piece mount.

His setup performs multiple duties. To begin with, it helps cement his excitement for the sport of shooting. His stack of *Special Weapons* and *Tactical Weapons* magazines attest to his appreciation of black guns and their performance. Next, this was his first firearm purchase—he alone must take care of it. Lastly, he had a firearm that he could pass down to his children. His new AR has fueled his shooting enthusiasm and will hopefully spike another generation of shooters years from now when he passes it on to his kids. *—Mark Kayser*

PROVEN



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"The Minute Man was as easy and fast to run as some other guns I have tested that cost almost twice as much."



★ MIDWEST INDUSTRIES' ★

GUNS of LIBERTY

Ride along with the speedy, reliable, accurate and U.S.-component-built Minute Man SSK12.

BY FRED MASTISON • **PHOTOS** BY STRAIGHT 8

A NEED FOR A GENERAL MILITIA was established in the early days of the American colonies—back when the Gadsen flag was first woven and waved. The general militia's most well-known purpose was to defend the colonies during the Revolutionary War. What is sometimes misunderstood, though, is the role played by Minutemen. Generally, they are blended into history as a part of the militia, with few consequential details attached. The story of the Minutemen is intriguing, however, as they were our country's first quick-reaction force.

The Minutemen were specially selected from the ranks of the general militia muster rolls by their commanding officers. They were generally 25 years of age or younger and in excellent physical shape. These were elite soldiers, and less than 25 percent of all of the colonial militia qualified for the Minutemen. They were proven marksmen, reliable and capable of being ready for battle in 30 minutes or less. They would be the stopgap that protected the colonies until the larger regular militia could be assembled and brought into the fight. The formation of Minutemen units predates the Revolutionary War and goes back as far as 1645. These men would see extensive action in the French and Indian War in the 1750s. Their greatest feat, though, was when they were assembled in February of 1775 and engaged the British in Concord. Their trademarks were accuracy, reliability and resiliency.

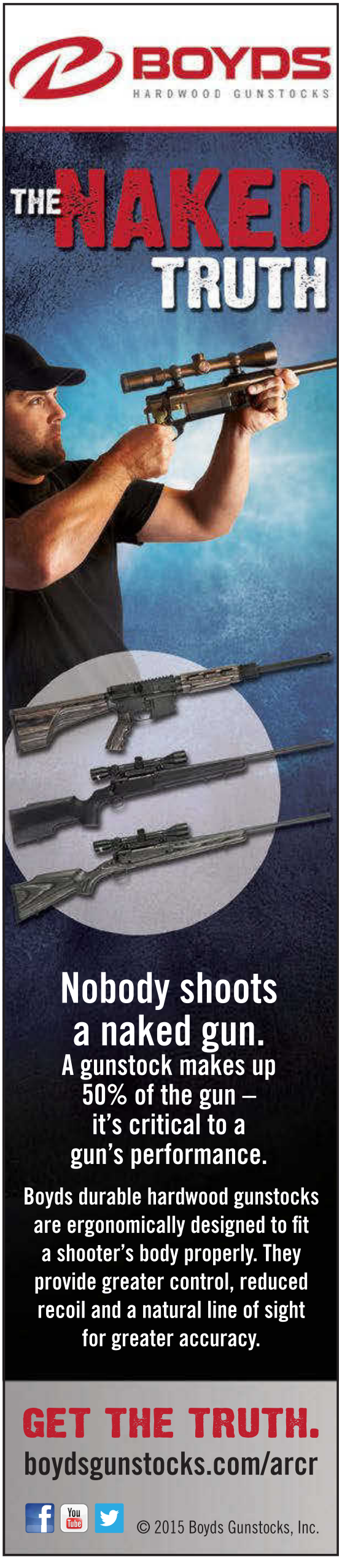
PATRIOT BY DESIGN

These are the same traits that are found in the new Midwest Industries SSK12 Minute Man rifle. These similarities are not coincidental but by design.

I had the opportunity to visit with Troy Storch of Midwest Industries at a recent industry trade show. He passionately detailed his new rifle project and explained why he was entering what most people consider a flooded market. He feels that the spirit of the Minutemen still exists in America and, ultimately, is still needed. He designed the new rifle as a tool for those who embody the American ideals.

Storch explained, "We wanted a rifle that represented freedom and a top-notch, made-in-the-U.S.A. product. When we planned the construction and the component layout for this rifle, we wanted it to be of nothing but the highest-grade components. We also wanted to price this rifle extremely fairly and have a list of features that was hard to improve upon. We wanted a rifle that the end-user did not have to buy and start over by adding better quality parts."

He wanted to build a rifle that held the same characteristics as the Minuteman's rifle:



reliable, accurate and affordable to the average citizen. It became clear that the goal here was much more than just trying to sell another rifle.

The Minute Man rifle is a careful balance of cost and performance. Midwest's goal is to provide a rifle with world-class components that is still affordable to the average shooter. There is very little in the space between "entry-level" and "high-end" rifles. It is obvious, though, that Midwest has done its homework.

MEET THE MAN

The SSK12 Minute Man is an AR-platform rifle chambered in 5.56mm NATO. It all starts with matched, billet-machined upper and lower receivers. Perfectly cut from 6061-T6 aluminum forgings, they are also mil-spec hardcoat anodized. The upper receiver has M4 feed ramps, and the flattop rail is conveniently laser-engraved with T-markings for returning optics to the same place.

Midwest Industries equips the upper with an FNH-USA-manufactured, 16-inch, mid-length, hammer-forged, chrome-lined, medium-contour barrel with a 1-in-7-inch twist rate. The barrel comes fitted with a Midwest Industries low-profile gas block underneath its proprietary, 12-inch, free-floating SSK KeyMod handguard. A popular item in the MI inventory to begin with, the SSK handguard is a great addition to the rifle. Smooth and clean cut, this handguard comes in at only 1.5 inches in diameter. Combining a top Picatinny rail and KeyMod slots at 3 and 6 o'clock, it provides the rifle with a high-end feel. One last note on the handguard: Midwest has included two quick-detach (QD) sling attachment points on the left and right sides that are thoughtfully designed to eliminate over-rotation of the QD mount. This small detail may go unnoticed by some, but to serious shooters it is a welcomed inclusion.

Departing from what many builders are doing, Midwest has built its own bolt carrier group made from Carpenter 158 steel. This steel has a higher chromium and nickel content in it than steel found in other bolt carrier groups. Once again, the company is demonstrating solid attention to important details. Matched perfectly with that is the Bravo Company Manufacturing (BCM) Gunfighter charging handle.

The lower receiver enjoys the same professional focus as the upper. With a reinforced buffer tube, an integrated triggerguard and thicker walls, it is the perfect fit for the hearty upper. Special details include a flared magazine well for quicker reloads that is wire-EDM cut for precision. Other quality components are included in the lower as well. These include the BCM Gunfighter pistol grip, the B5 Systems SOPMOD Bravo stock and a 45-degree, ambidextrous safety selector from Battle Arms Development. The inclusion of this safety is one of the many features that stick out in my mind. In a time when a majority of builders are cutting corners to save costs or improve their profit margin, Midwest has taken the time to include an accessory designed for the serious shooter. The finishing touch is a subtle tip of the hat to the Minuteman ideal. Laser-etched onto the front of the lower receiver is a Gadsden snake set above the quote "Don't Tread On Me."



The billet-crafted receivers sport several enhancements inside and out, including M4 feed ramps and a Carpenter 158 steel bolt carrier group.

The rifle we received from Midwest was an out-of-the-box version of the SSK12. Even with a hearty billet upper and lower, the rifle still only weighs in at

SPECIFICATIONS
MIDWEST SSK12 MINUTE MAN

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32-36 inches
WEIGHT:	7 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	B5 Systems SOPMOD Bravo
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$1,500

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Midwest Industries outfits the rifle with a 12-inch-long SSK KeyMod handguard, an FNH USA barrel and a B5 Systems SOPMOD Bravo buttstock.

7 pounds unloaded, making life easier. We promptly attached an Aimpoint Patrol Rifle Optic (PRO) and headed to the range. After a lube session and brief zeroing, we were ready to roll on testing.

RANGE WRINGOUT

For this session we used the Midwest Industries metal, 30-round, 5.56mm magazine included in the kit. The first order of business was shooting to test the Minute Man's accuracy. We fired several five-round groups from a supported bench position to see what the rifle could really do. I used Federal's 69-grain Sierra MatchKing ammunition for the first string of fire. At 100 yards, the best group I managed was a breath over 1 inch. This is impressive performance for this platform. I believe I could have succeeded in getting a 1-inch or smaller group had I been using a magnified optic. Knowing that most people will not be shooting match ammo, we then moved on to readily available PMC 55-grain ball ammo, once again shooting five-round groups from a supported bench. As expected, the 55-grain ball ammo had wider groups. My best group on these strings, however, was still a very pleasant 1.5 inches. This is solid performance beyond what most would expect from a "stock" rifle.

The next section of testing focused on the rifle's handling and ease of manipulation. We ran a series of barricade drills that forced me to shoot from a variety of positions with little time to get from Point A to Point B. It also included long strings of fire requiring multiple reloads. One of the luxuries I enjoy is having done these drills hundreds of times. With that in mind, it is easier for me to notice differences in the gun I am running. What I found was that the Minute Man rifle was very quick to run and easy to manipulate. The SSK KeyMod handguard was a real pleasure on this rifle. Being small in diameter and completely dehorned helped give this fighting rifle a fine-tuned 3-Gun feel. The Minute Man was as easy and fast to run as some other guns I have tested that cost almost twice as much. The flared mag well made reloads on the move much easier, and the inclusion of the BCM Gunfighter pistol grip made shooting a pleasure.

I moved smoothly from barricade to barricade with several changes in shooting angles and grips. Through portholes and around corners, the rifle was easy to handle and bring onto target. I took the time to run one of my range officers through the course with the rifle as well. It is one thing to do it, but another to watch someone shoot it. His report was identical to mine, as I suspected. His change in grip as he moved from obstacle to obstacle was fluid, which I attribute to the ergonomics of the design. Times were fast and shots were on target.

PERFORMANCE

MIDWEST SSK12 MINUTE MAN

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Federal 69 Sierra Matchking	2,950	1.12
PMC 55 Bronze 223A	3,200	1.50

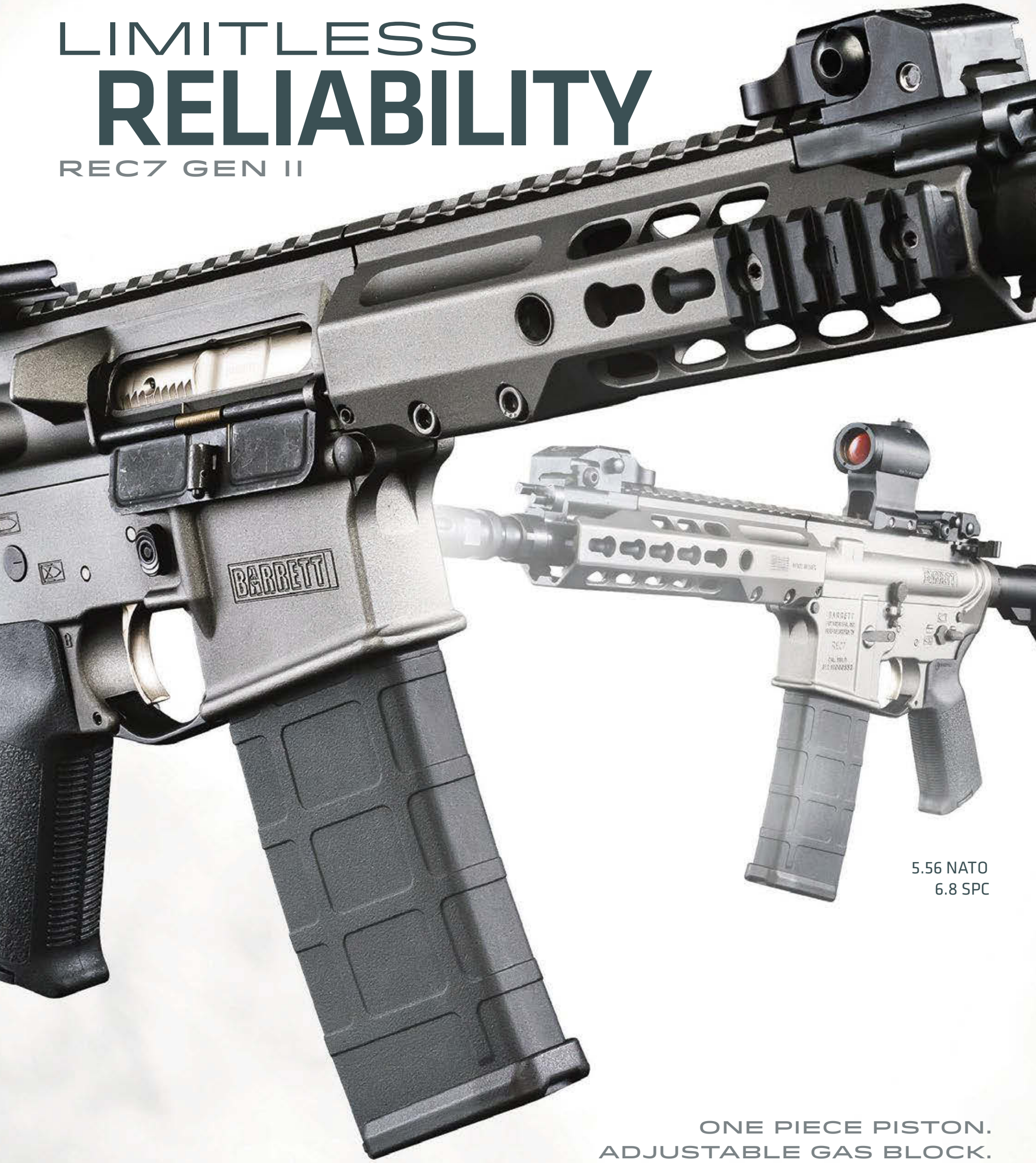
NOTE: Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

STILL FIGHTING

In total, we ran 500 rounds through the rifle, with a majority of it being 55-grain ball ammo. In that time, we did not experience any malfunctions of any kind. It is difficult and somewhat reckless to judge a rifle's durability on only 500 rounds. What I can deduce, however, based on experience, is that the components in this gun and its solid design will give it an exceptionally long lifespan. With lubrication, regular general cleaning and maintenance, this rifle will be a solid shooter for a very long time.

Midwest Industries is a prolific company with a variety of components for a variety of weapons. There is a good chance that your AR or AK has at least one Midwest Industries item on it. The company has a positive , well-earned reputation and is seen as a leader in the industry. This will only be expanded as it moves beyond rails and sights into actual rifle production. The SSK12 Minute Man is certainly more than a safe queen. It successfully represents everything that a modern-day Minuteman needs. It is truly the modern musket. For more information, visit midwestindustriesinc.com or call 262-896-6780.

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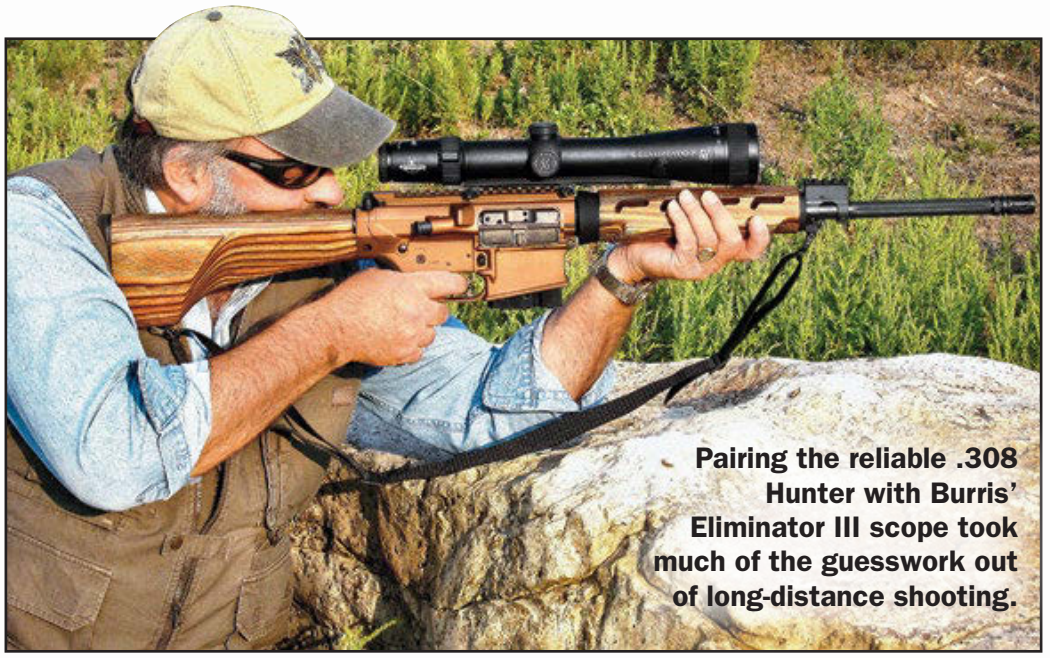
Meet the .308 Hunter, the new king of the woods that blends high-tech and classic like no other.

BY DENIS PRISBREY • **PHOTOS** BY STEVE WOODS



With its laminate furniture and coyote brown receivers, Windham Weaponry's .308 Hunter will blend into the backwoods but stand out in a sea of black guns. Shown with a 4-16x50mm Burris Eliminator III scope.

Warrior



Pairing the reliable .308 Hunter with Burris' Eliminator III scope took much of the guesswork out of long-distance shooting.

IF YOU GREW UP in a time and place before the AR-15 became America's sweetheart, as I did, chances are your first impressions of the plastic-and-aluminum rifles were a bit less than love at first sight, as mine were. Since that long-ago occasion on a hot Texas day not far from San Antonio when a government employee handed me and 30 or so other guys with shaved heads and baggy green fatigues an M16, 40-something years of shooting the Stoner design in a number of sizes, shapes and configurations has changed my mind about them. But back then, coming from a background where working guns were solid wood and steel, I was distinctly unimpressed. It was ugly. It had no grace, no personality, no stylistic flair, no signs of hands-on craftsmanship, and it looked and felt downright flimsy.

Time passed, I carried M16s and AR-15s professionally in military and police uniforms, as well as on my own time, and eventually found the AR a far better design than I originally realized. Grace? Stylistic flair? Well, still a resounding "no" there, but tough enough, reliable enough and (once the caliber wars created some very interesting possibilities) powerful enough to fill a number of roles. When the steamroller got up sufficient momentum and fans of the platform began to take to the idea of a .308 version on big-game hunts, the race was on. Which eventually led to something I never thought I'd see—a truly classy AR.

CLASSY HYBRID

One of the things that made the original M16 rifle so unique was the use of lighter and easier-to-make materials and components, with all the visual appeal of an asphalt re-surfacer. Functional, yes; aesthetically rewarding, no.

Windham Weaponry has actually managed to come up with several hybrid ARs that bridge the gap between "moderne" and "classique" and offer genuine standout wood furniture among a sea of basic black and boring synthetic. Normally, I'm a bolt guy when it comes to the .308 Winchester, but during a periodic revisit to Windham's website to see what the company was up to, the .308 Hunter, with its Nutmeg laminate furniture, reached out through my computer screen.

"...if the wood's not enough to sell you, there's more. Windham pays attention to quality control, in both materials and manufacturing."





The upper and lower receivers are handsomely hardcoat anodized in coyote brown, while the rifle's standard AR controls are black. The lower receiver features a Hogue pistol grip and a beveled magazine well for faster reloads.

Yeah, I know—wood offers very little real advantage over conventional plastic in an AR context, but two areas where it *does* up the game are in strength and cosmetics. The laminated wood on these rifles comes from Boyds', a well-known name in OEM and aftermarket stocks, who sources them as blanks from a Maine company and then CNC machines and finishes them in-house before supplying them to Windham for installation. The laminate will not warp, it won't crack, it's much more solid than thin synthetics, and the buttstock may not be adjustable, but it also has no small slider parts like latches to break or wear out if the rifle has to lead a hard life. And it just looks cool. It's a throw-back to earlier times where many of us hunted with the feel and appeal of solid wood on our rifles.

THE HITS KEEP COMING

But if the wood's not enough to sell you, there's more. Windham pays attention to quality control, in both materials and manufacturing. The .308 Hunter features an 18-inch, air-gauged, 4150M chrome-moly steel, medium-weight, fluted barrel that is chrome lined with a 1-in-10-inch twist rate and equipped with an A2-style flash suppressor. The railed gas block features a steel sling swivel.

The forged 7075-T6 upper is paired with a matching lower with an integral, solid triggerguard, and both are hardcoat anodized in coyote brown to match the darker Nutmeg furniture, including the two-piece ventilated handguard and solid buttstock, which comes with a rear sling swivel and a thin, black rubber Boyds' buttpad to help absorb recoil.

Inside, the bolt is fabricated from strong Carpenter 158 steel and the bolt carrier is made from high-quality 8620 steel. There are no MIM parts, and the fire control group uses the same parts as Windham's 5.56mm ARs, so they are interchangeable with any quality-made mil-spec parts from other sources. The firing pin is proprietary to Windham's, though; the world of the .308 AR is not quite as standardized as the 5.56mm, and you can't always assume one maker's specs will translate directly to another maker's gun. Besides the fire control group's commonality, more good news comes in regard to the magazines. The rifle ships with one steel, five-round magazine from D&H Tactical, and the company sells spare five-rounders at $26.95, and 10- and 20-round Magpul PMAGs for $18 and $20, respectively. Windham sells a full range of parts to keep these rifles going. The AR is relatively kitchen-table friendly to work on, and whether you order from Windham or another source, it should be easy to keep a small stock of high-wear items like extractors, firing pins, ejectors, hammers and triggers on hand if you're so inclined.

A black Hogue OverMolded pistol grip, single-sided safety, forward assist and standard Picatinny top rail complete the package, and the whole rifle adds up to 8.5 pounds unloaded. In the .308 AR field, where rifles typically run heavy, this is not bad at all. It might be a shade heavy for all-day treks up mountains in the fall, but for tree-standers and other still-hunters, it's very usable.

SPECIFICATIONS
WINDHAM .308 HUNTER

CALIBER:	.308 Winchester
BARREL:	18 inches
OA LENGTH:	39.5 inches
WEIGHT:	8.5 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Laminated hardwood
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Coyote brown, Nutmeg
CAPACITY:	5+1
MSRP:	$1,587

DIALING-IN ACCURACY

The Burris 4-16x50mm Eliminator III seemed like an interesting way to run the Windham rifle through its paces for accuracy, with its rugged alloy housing containing an adjustable illuminated

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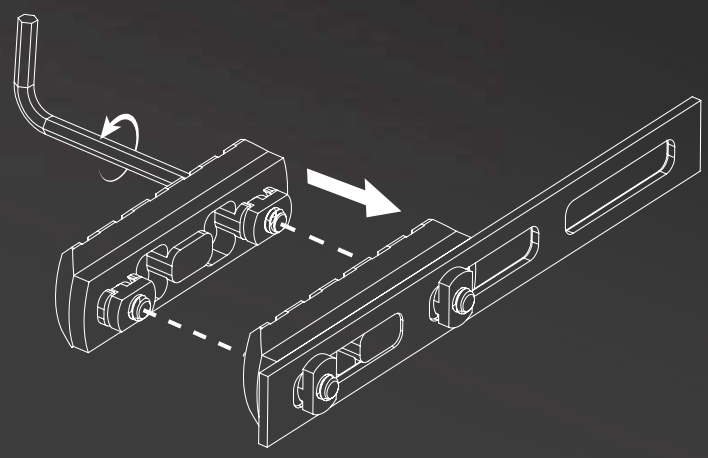
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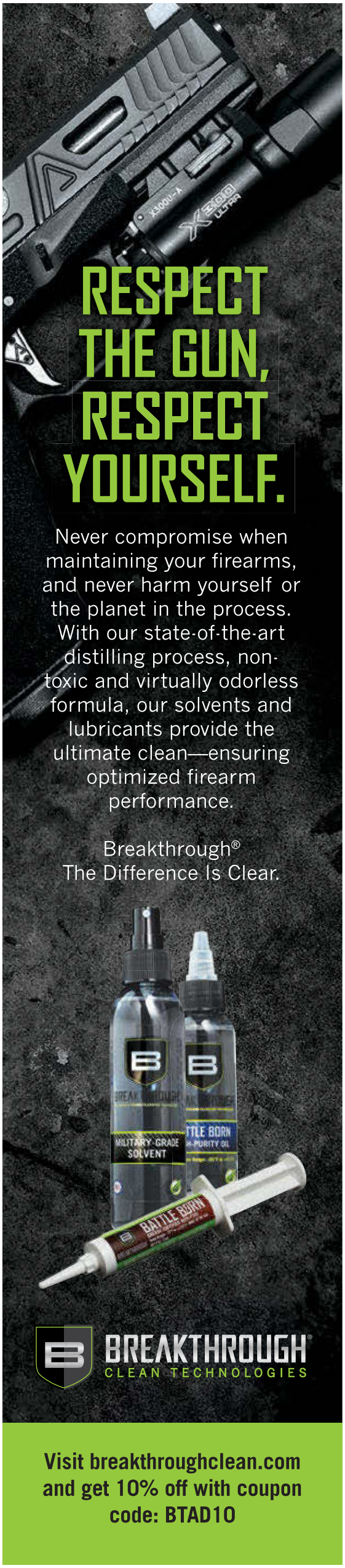
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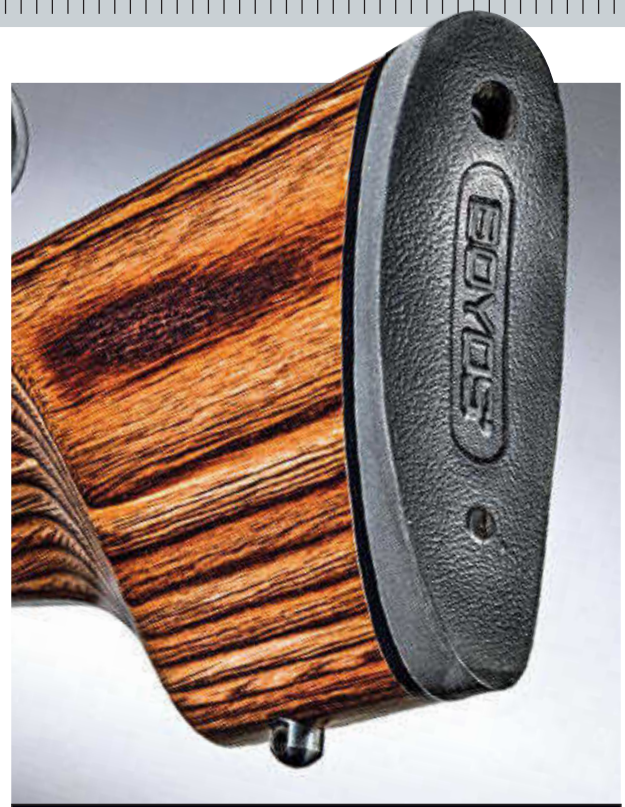


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Windham Weaponry ships its .308 Hunter with a high-quality, steel, five-round magazine from D&H Tactical.



The buttstock comes with a thick rubber Boyds' recoil pad that helps anchor the rifle against your shoulder.

reticle, a laser rangefinder and a user-programmable ballistic calculator optimized for the .308 Winchester (but adaptable to the .223 Remington and others). The Eliminator III uses two included steel crossbolts to mate with a standard Picatinny base rail. Powered by a single CR123A battery, the Eliminator III scope adds 30.4 ounces to the rifle, but there are hunts where the weight could be considered justifiable.

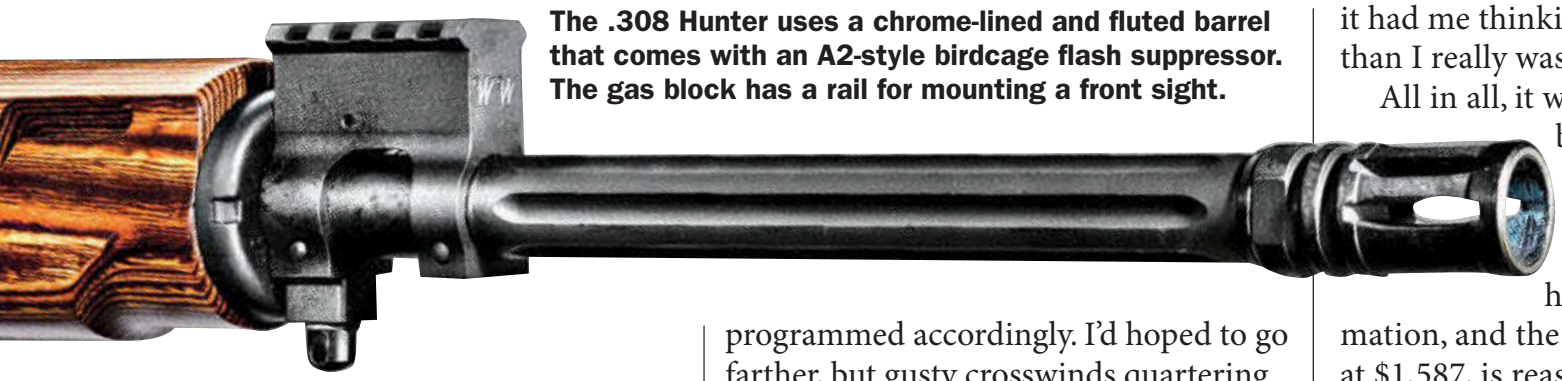
The unit is built to remove long-range guesswork by combining the distance in either user-selected yards or meters (from the internal laser rangefinder) with a three-digit drop number and two-digit ballistic coefficient (taken from tables provided by Burris) for specific commercial loads and programmed into the optic, to automatically light up an appropriate red dot on a descending stadia line in the reticle display to adjust for elevation at whatever distance the target happens to be. A 12-page cartridge list is included, but Burris has figures for over 4,000 known factory rounds if your pet's not in it, running from .17 Remington to .50 BMG, and once your chosen load's programmed in and you've zeroed exactly dead-on at 100 yards with the crosshair junction, all you have to do is center the crosshairs on your target, push one button to activate the laser and reticle display, then put the correct illuminated red dot on target and pull the trigger. The range displays briefly for 10 seconds before shutting off, and the red dot for another 80 seconds. Windage offset scales up to 10 mph are provided as a part of the illuminated display. The ballistic calculations are based on a maximum drop at 750 yards, but the rangefinder and displays can reach farther with practice and a good load.

It takes a few minutes to read the setup instructions and program the scope for a given round, but even a Luddite like me can figure it out, and once set up, there's no need to change anything in the electronics unless you change something in the ballistics.

PERFORMANCE
WINDHAM .308 HUNTER

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Hornady 178 Match BTHP	2,635	3.31
Black Hills 175 Match BTHP	2,464	1.25
Federal 165 Vital-Shok	2,750	2.31
Federal 150 Power-Shok	2,771	2.19
Hornady 150 Superformance SST	2,811	1.63
Winchester 150 Power Max Bonded HP	2,754	0.75

NOTE: Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.



The .308 Hunter uses a chrome-lined and fluted barrel that comes with an A2-style birdcage flash suppressor. The gas block has a rail for mounting a front sight.

.308 PERFORMER

Obviously, you're asking yourself one of two questions right about now: Isn't the Burris a little over-scoped for the gun, or isn't the Windham a little undergunned for the scope? And the answer, of course, is a definite maybe. This may not be an ideal rifle/scope combo for most hunters, but it does show some of the capabilities of both products.

On a 92-degree day, I shot six commercial loads through the .308 Hunter to measure its accuracy at 100 yards, and on a 90-degree day the following week, I set up a sandbag rest in the desert and shot the best of the two heavyweight .308 loads—Black Hills' 178-grain Match BTHPs—out to 400 yards, with the Burris programmed accordingly. I'd hoped to go farther, but gusty crosswinds quartering from the rear were enough of a nuisance at 400 yards and more than I wanted to fight beyond that.

Letting the scope's computer do the work for elevation adjustments, the .308 Hunter knocked down my coyote-sized steel buffalo silhouette with one shot at 100, 200 and 300 yards, and with the buff sitting approximately 100 feet up on a hillside at 400 yards, elevation wasn't a problem, but doping the crosswind was. Taking several shots to knock the steel down, I didn't realize till I climbed back up to it that I'd actually hit it five out of 10 times but had it too well-supported against thick brush to tip over, until I shot one leg out from under it. Bullet splatter kicking up dust around it had me thinking I was missing more than I really was.

All in all, it was an informative test of both products. The Burris is pricey at $1,799, but it can be a godsend for those who have a hard time with range estimation, and the Windham .308 Hunter, at $1,587, is reasonably priced for a .308 AR with more than enough accuracy and range to reach out there if needed.

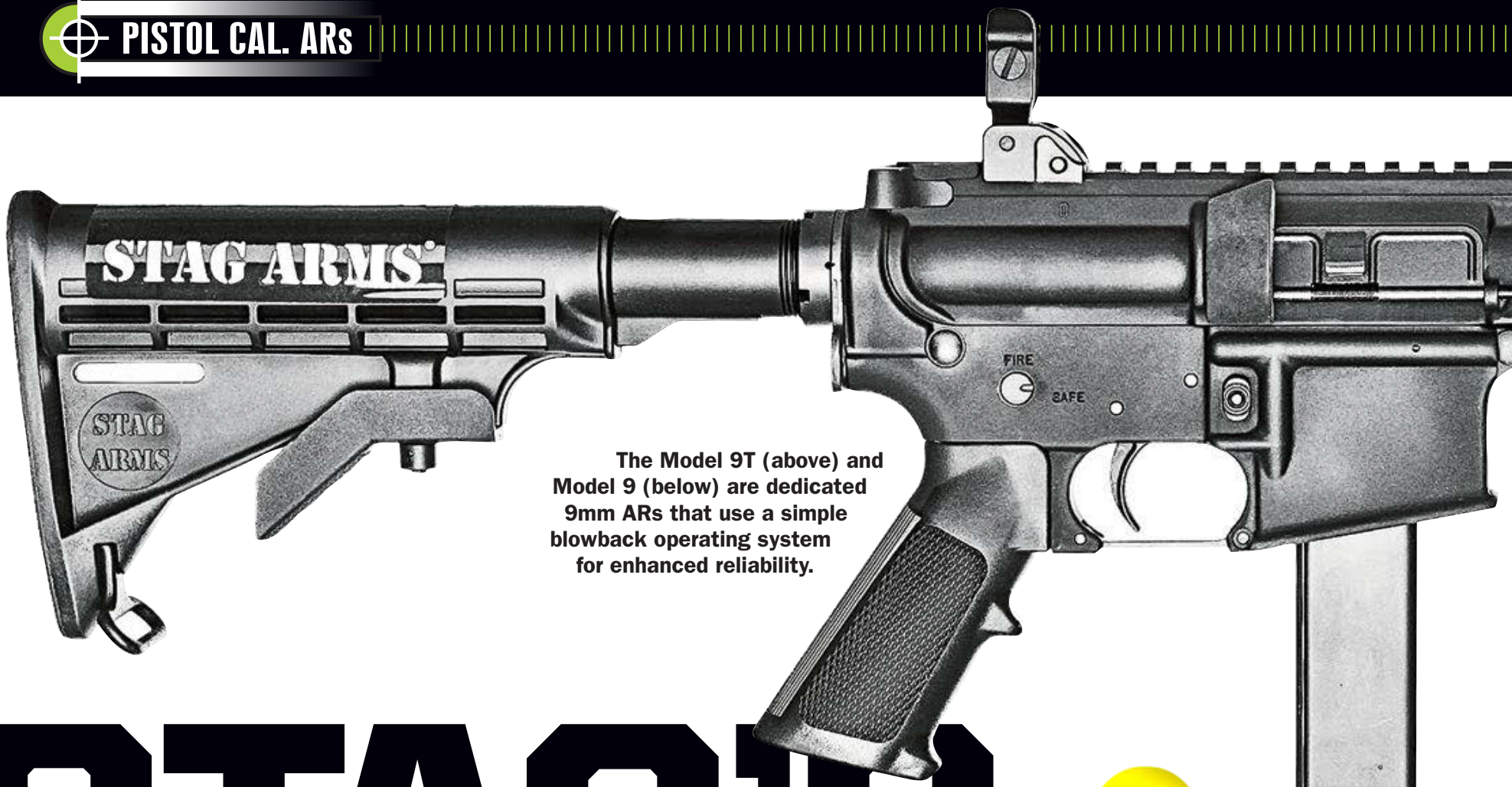
If you like the AR platform, prefer .308 power levels and think the elevation-assist optic can boost your chances of meat in the freezer, this rifle/scope combination's worth the money and worth a try. There are obviously other crossover applications for a long-range .308 semi-auto that also factor in, too.

For More Information

BURRIS OPTICS
burrisoptics.com; 970-356-1670

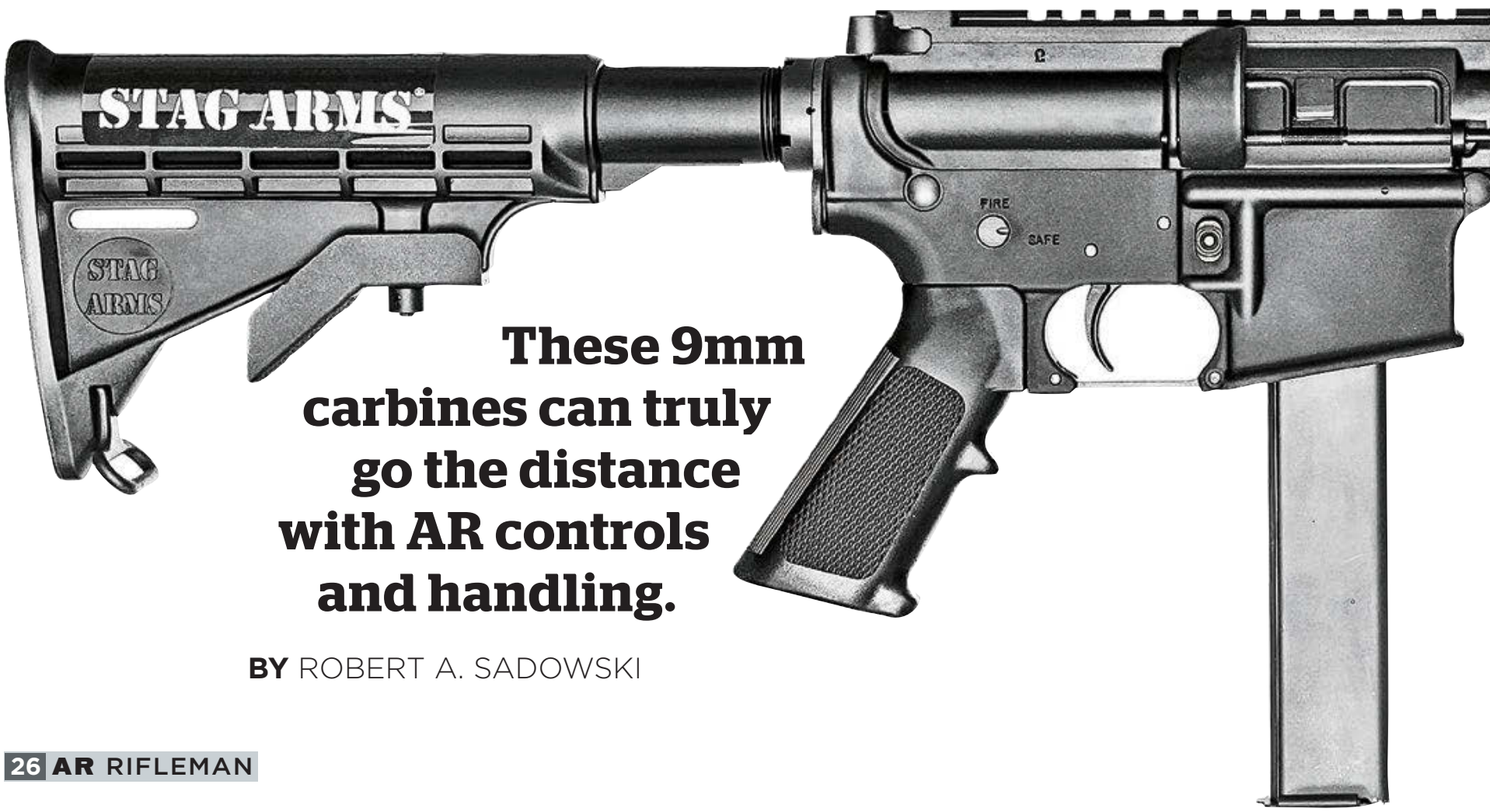
WINDHAM WEAPONRY
windhamweaponry.com; 855-808-1888





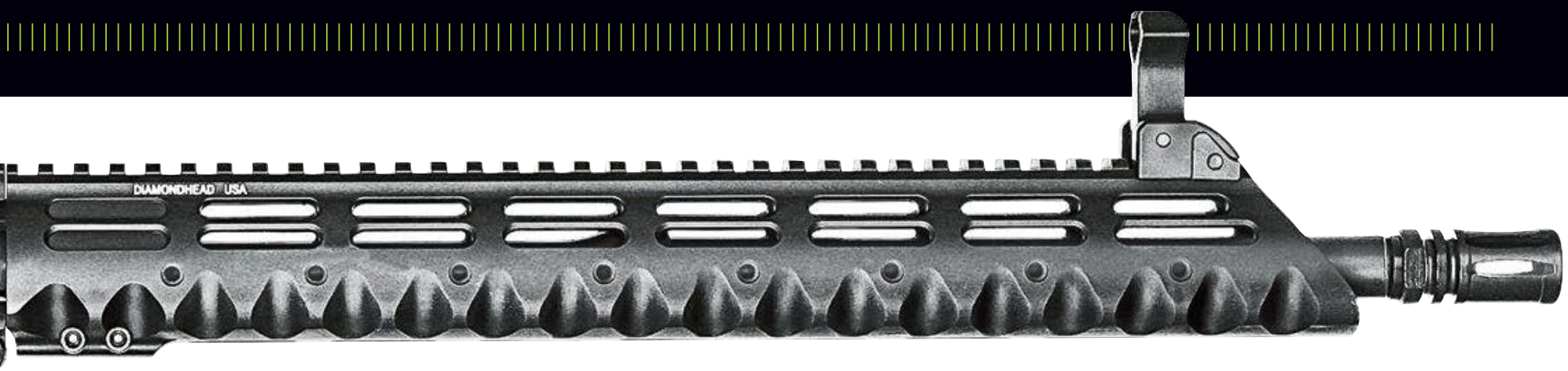
The Model 9T (above) and Model 9 (below) are dedicated 9mm ARs that use a simple blowback operating system for enhanced reliability.

STAG'S PERFECT NINES



These 9mm carbines can truly go the distance with AR controls and handling.

BY ROBERT A. SADOWSKI



A CARBINE chambered in a pistol caliber like the 9mm means less recoil and muzzle blast, and more accurately placed bullets downrange on the target. Stag Arms' semi-automatic Models 9 and 9T are designed specifically for 9mm ammunition—the same ammo you might carry in your sidearm—yet offer the familiarity of the AR platform.

Many AR manufacturers over the years have offered 9mm conversion kits to allow AR-15s to fire 9mm ammo. Typically, a 9mm upper is used with a drop-in magazine block to make the 5.56mm magazine well compatible with 9mm stick magazines. Stag Arms' Models 9 and 9T, however, employ dedicated 9mm upper and lower receivers.

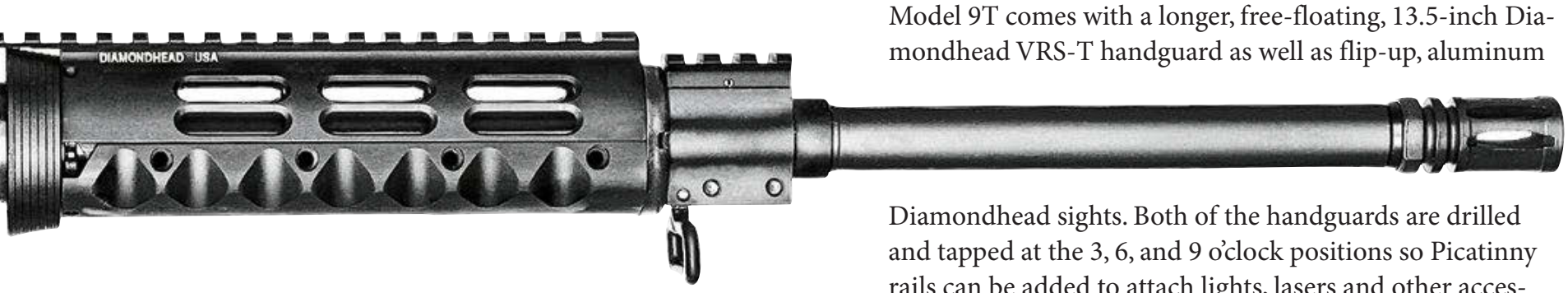
TO THE NINES

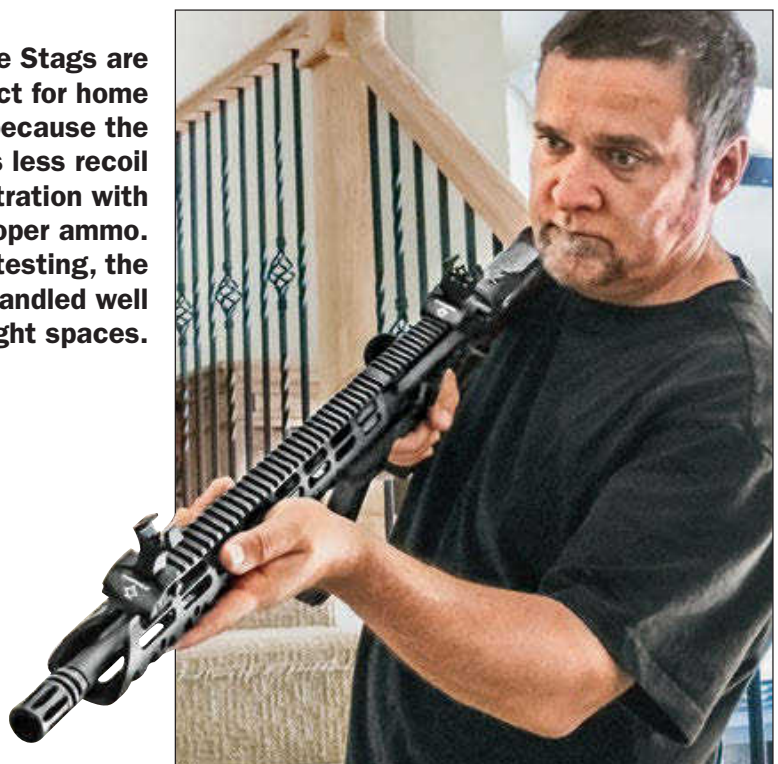
The uppers feature heavy-profile, 16-inch, 4140 steel barrels with 1-in-10-inch twist rates. The bore and chamber are chromed, and the muzzle is capped with an A2-style flash suppressor. As with all Stag Arms ARs, right- and left-handed configurations are available.

What also sets these 9mm ARs apart from standard AR-15s is the operating system. The Models 9 and 9T use a simple blowback system—not a direct impingement or gas piston system. The Stag upper employs a one-piece bolt and carrier with a modified ejection port cover and an enlarged brass deflector. The lower receiver is also different, as it uses an integrated magazine well plus a specially designed hammer, magazine catch and recoil buffer. All of the AR controls, including the safety, charging handle, magazine release, safety selector and forward assist, function the same.

The Models 9 and 9T accept standard 32-round, Colt-style, 9mm AR magazines—straight sticks holding a double-stack column of cartridges. The carbines come with magazines featuring steel bodies and polymer followers that are bright orange so a user can visibly see the magazine is unloaded when the bolt locks back after the last shot is fired. The magazines have round-count witness holes, and the steel floorplates slide out easily when the detent pin is pressed in for easy disassembly and maintenance. Brownells offers Colt-style magazines, so I ordered a few. They are constructed of steel with steel followers and a slick Xylan coating for smoother operation.

The Model 9 features an optic-ready, non-functioning, railed gas block and a Diamondhead VRS-T handguard. The Model 9T comes with a longer, free-floating, 13.5-inch Diamondhead VRS-T handguard as well as flip-up, aluminum Diamondhead sights. Both of the handguards are drilled and tapped at the 3, 6, and 9 o'clock positions so Picatinny rails can be added to attach lights, lasers and other accessories. Oblong cutouts along the sides and bottom of each handguard help reduce weight and ensure the barrel cools quickly. As mentioned, the Models 9 and 9T are also available in left-hand configurations.





These Stags are perfect for home defense because the 9mm offers less recoil and penetration with the proper ammo. During testing, the Model 9T handled well in tight spaces.

RUNNING THE STAG

I got my hands on a Model 9T and found it was pure AR but with less recoil, less muzzle climb and less noise. For sighting I mounted a Mepro Tru-Dot RDS with a 1.8-MOA reticle. In handling the 9T, manipulating the stick magazine into the magazine well was the only thing that was different, since the magazine is long and skinny compared to the typical AR-15-style magazines that are wider and flatter.

Using 9mm ammunition offers less overpenetration, but most users know that choosing the right 5.56mm ammo can achieve similar results. But with a 9mm rifle, you can run it and a pistol with the same ammo. There's no need to buy two types of ammo. I loaded the Stag Arms and Brownells magazines with Winchester's 115-grain "White Box" FMJs, Hornady's 115-grain Steel Match HAP rounds and Atlanta Arms' 147-grain FMJs.

I had absolutely no issues running the Model 9T with either the Stag Arms or Brownells magazines. Even when I mixed up ammo types in a magazine, the Model 9T didn't even come close to choking, and I ran it hard with numerous tactical and bolt-lock reloads as the extra packing lube

4 MORE NINES

There are several other 9mm ARs available. Here are a few carbines that offer 9mm ammo versatility with a pistol and make good companion weapons for home defense.

SPECS SPECS SPECS

SPECIFICATIONS

STAG ARMS MODEL 9T

CALIBER:	9mm
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32.25-35.75 inches
WEIGHT:	7.9 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	Diamondhead flip-up
ACTION:	Blowback, semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	32+1
MSRP:	$1,275

cooked off due to the continuous shooting. The carbine ran flawlessly throughout my testing on the range.

The 9T uses a single-stage trigger, and my test sample's pull weight averaged 5.9 pounds. It had a slightly perceptible amount of creep before it broke, but I liked the trigger and was able to rapidly reset and fire for accurate sustained bursts. Bench-resting the 9T, I was able to shoot some nice tight groups. My best five-shot group at 25 yards, produced with the Winchester ammo, measured 0.75 inches. Firing off-hand for speed, the groups opened up to about 4 inches on average at that distance with all the ammo tested. Loading one, two or three rounds in the four magazines and then mixing them up on the bench top allowed me to practice bolt-lock reloads with the sticks since I did not know how many rounds were in a magazine or when the bolt would lock back. This gave me the chance to become further acquainted with how the 9T operated, plus I was able to work the stick magazines more efficiently.

The Mepro Tru-Dot sight was fast on target. It suited the Stag Arms Model 9T well and also co-witnessed with the Diamondhead iron sights. Turning off the red dot, I flipped up the Diamondhead sights and ran a few drills with just the iron sights. The Diamondhead VRS-T handguard is slim, and its design offered a secure grip without any sharp edges.

Pistol-caliber carbines offer ammo compatibility with a sidearm. The Stag Arms Model 9T is an excellent partner for your 9mm pistol, offering reliability, control familiarity and less chance of over-penetration. For more information, visit stagarms.com or call 860-229-9994.





HARD ROCK LAR-47



Rock River Arms' AK/AR hybrid takes to the backwoods with 7.62x39mm firepower!

BY ANDY MASSIMILIAN

Companies have been building AR-15 rifles chambered in 7.62x39mm for years. Unfortunately, those rifles that use standard AR-15-style lower receivers are often unreliable because the straight-walled magazine well of an AR-15 is not well suited to cartridges with tapered cases. Special magazine followers help, but there's no getting around the fact that the 7.62x39mm cartridge works far better in the AK's characteristically curved magazine, which doesn't fit the AR-15's magazine well.

The LAR-47 from Rock River Arms (RRA) is the company's first rifle chambered in 7.62x39mm, and it solves this feeding problem by using a radically redesigned AR-15 lower receiver that accepts many unmodified AK-47 magazines. The LAR-47 Delta I tested, with its quad-rail handguard, ERGO grip and more sophisticated collapsible stock, is an upgrade to the standard model.

RUNNING THE BEAST

The LAR-47 uses the AR-15's conventional direct gas impingement operating system with the gas block mounted in a carbine-length position. The rifle uses forged aluminum receivers, but the lower has a magazine well shaped to accommodate AK-47 magazines with their characteristic curve and rear locking tab. Like the AK-47, the LAR-47 lacks a bolt catch so the bolt closes on an empty magazine and cannot be locked open. Some of that lost functionality, however, can be recovered by using certain Yugoslavian and Croatian AK-47 magazines with followers that hold the bolt rearward while inserted.

Loading and unloading the rifle is similar to the AK-47. To load, simply tilt the magazine forward to engage the lip with the receiver, then rock the magazine backwards to lock it in place. To unload, press the ambidextrous, paddle-style release mounted inside the triggerguard and sweep the magazine forward. The magazine release is made from steel and firmly locks the polymer, 30-round magazine in place without any movement. Though RRA notes that most AK-47 magazines will fit, the Chinese and Tapco mags I tried did not, nor will any drum magazines. A Magpul magazine, however, did fit and function perfectly.

The LAR-47 field-strips like an AR-15 and uses the same internals, including the trigger, safety, disconnector, hammer and springs. The two-stage trigger on my test rifle weighed approximately 5.5 pounds. Besides the obvious, parts that differ include the upper receiver, bolt and bolt carrier, extractor, ejector and firing pin.

Certain parts are chrome plated—a big plus for this rifle given the availability of surplus ammo with corrosive primers. The LAR-47 has a chrome-lined barrel and chrome-plated bolt carrier, bolt, extractor, ejector and firing pin. The 16-inch barrel has an HBAR profile and an A2-style flash suppressor. Its 1-in-10-inch rifling twist rate is standard for the 7.62x39mm cartridge.



Rock River Arms offers several LAR-47 variants—including the CAR A4 (shown with an EOTech HWS and Midwest Industries backup sights) and the Delta the author tested—but they all combine AK firepower and AR ergonomics.

SPECIFICATIONS

ROCK RIVER ARMS LAR-47 DELTA

CALIBER:	7.62x39mm
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	36.5 inches
WEIGHT:	7.75 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$1,545

COM BLOC BLAST

Though most 7.62x39mm loads are not known for their accuracy, I tested the LAR-47 Delta at 100 yards using a Leopold Mark 4 scope, a Caldwell rest and sandbags with three loads from Hornady, Red Army Standard and Wolf. To test the rifle's functioning, I also used Golden Tiger ammo. With the Hornady and Wolf rounds, I achieved the best five-shot groups of 1 and 1.25 inches, respectively. Several of the Wolf groups would be tight until the fifth shot, a flyer, opened them up. The best Red Army group measured 2.9 inches.

Rock River Arms' LAR-47 Delta handled well even with full magazines and was very controllable, especially when fitted with a Magpul foregrip. It really worked well when transitioning between targets.

KEEP ON ROCKING!

There are no fewer than 15 new AR-15 rifles in Rock River Arms' lineup, and four of these are from the new IRS (Integrated Rifle Sights) series. IRS rifles are chambered in 5.56mm NATO and use a conventional RRA setup for the lower receiver and buttstock, but they feature a unique one-piece handguard, a Picatinny top rail that extends without interruption from the upper receiver to the front of the handguard, integrated flip-up iron sights and a helical muzzle brake.

RRA rifles are broad enough to fulfill a wide range of user preferences and mission requirements. The company makes it easy for buyers to configure a rifle with over a dozen equipment options that allow the customer to build a unique rifle right from the factory at a far lower cost than with aftermarket customization. If you want an AR-15 built a specific way, Rock River Arms is a great place to get it done. The following is a snapshot of nine of RRA's latest complete rifle offerings. For more information, and to see more guns, call 866-980-7625 or visit rockriverarms.com.

RRA IRS CAR



RRA IRS MID



RRA IRS STD



RRA IRS XL



SPECS SPECS SPECS SPECS SPECS

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	34.5-38 inches
WEIGHT:	7.6 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	RRA Operator CAR
SIGHTS:	Flip-up front and rear
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$1,540

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	34.5-38 inches
WEIGHT:	7.8 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	RRA Operator CAR
SIGHTS:	Flip-up front and rear
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$1,565

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	34.5-38 inches
WEIGHT:	8 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	RRA Operator CAR
SIGHTS:	Flip-up front and rear
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$1,590

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	18 inches
OA LENGTH:	36.5-40 inches
WEIGHT:	8 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	RRA Operator CAR
SIGHTS:	Flip-up front and rear
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$1,620

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-BRUCE LEE



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RRA LAR-9 CAR A4



RRA LAR-PDS



RRA LAR-458 X-1



RRA LAR-15 PDW



RRA LAR-47 X-1



SPECS SPECS SPECS SPECS SPECS

CALIBER:	9mm
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	36 inches
WEIGHT:	7.1 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	RRA Tactical CAR
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	32+1
MSRP:	$1,180

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	36 inches
WEIGHT:	7.4 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	RRA Tactical CAR
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Piston-driven semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$1,595

CALIBER:	.458 SOCOM
BARREL:	18 inches
OA LENGTH:	39.5 inches
WEIGHT:	8.7 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	RRA Operator A2
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	10+1
MSRP:	$1,645

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	10.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	24-28.3 inches
WEIGHT:	7.2 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	NEAG CCS Carbine
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$1,220

CALIBER:	7.62x39mm
BARREL:	18 inches
OA LENGTH:	39 inches
WEIGHT:	8.2 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	RRA Operator A2
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$1,650

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P-223

.22 LONG RIFLE
MODEL: P-RIMFIRE

.300 BLACKOUT
MODELS: M-300 BLK
P-300 BLK

.308 WIN.
MODELS: M-308
P-308

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LWRC SIX8

Piston-driven semi-auto brings the added power and reliability for superior sporting and self-defense!

BY ROB GARRETT

THE DEBATE OVER WHICH AR operating system is better, piston versus direct impingement, is one that will never be truly won. What is irrefutable is that LWRC International is the industry leader in piston-driven carbines. LWRC rifles are authorized by a number of federal agencies. Most recently, the M6 Individual Carbine (IC), as part of the "1811 Package," has become one of two carbines authorized by the Drug Enforcement Administration. LWRC was also one of the leading contenders in the now-canceled Individual Carbine solicitation for the U.S. Army.

Last year, I had an opportunity to visit LWRC's facilities in Cambridge, Maryland. I came away from the visit impressed with the company's production process and quality control measures. At the time of my visit, the plant was in the middle of producing several thousand Six8 PSDs for a foreign customer. The customer approached LWRC about providing a suitable replacement to the unit's legacy personal-defense weapons. The potential quantity of the contract justified a substantial research and development effort by LWRC. One of the customer's requirements was a more potent round than the 5.56mm NATO. This opened the door for developing a compact weapon system in 6.8 SPC.



As its name implies, the Six8 SPR is chambered for the 6.8 SPC, a round that offers plenty of power for bagging deer.

Big Stock Photo



Working with Magpul, LWRC designed its piston-driven Six8 platform, including the SPR variant shown, from the ground up to reliably feed the powerful, spec-ops-born 6.8 SPC.



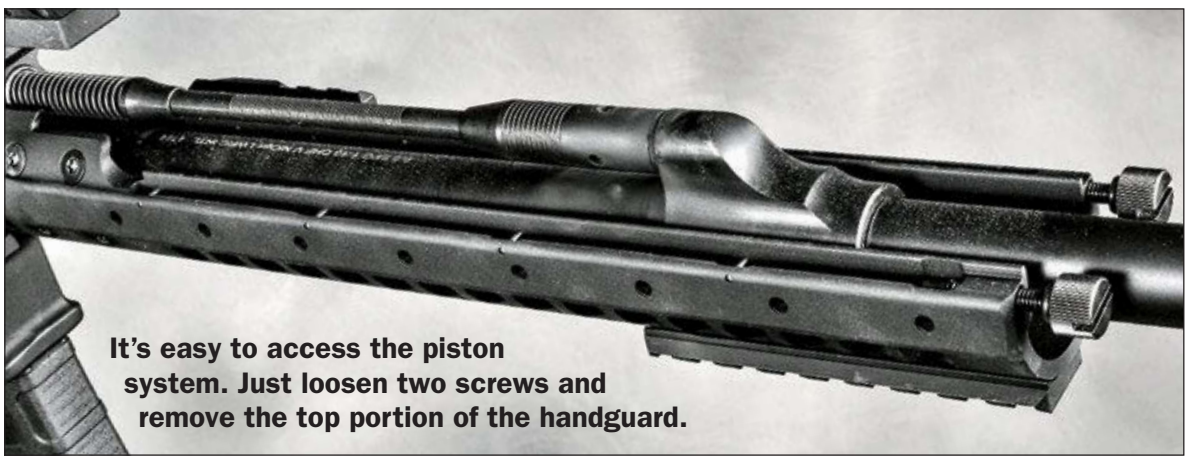
SIX8 SUCCESS

The story of the Six8 project is one of initiative, innovation and partnerships that involved collaboration between LWRC, Magpul Industries and ATK. The 6.8 SPC cartridge has long been recognized for its improved terminal ballistics over the 5.56mm NATO round. One of the problems has always been stuffing the 6.8 SPC cartridge into a rifle designed for the 5.56mm. While the 5.56mm magazine will accommodate the 6.8 SPC round, it is a tight fit that can lead to reliability issues, especially in a full-auto carbine. The reliability issues are compounded by the feed angle of the 5.56mm receiver and the lack of quality magazines.

Given the potential of the contract, LWRC made the decision to reengineer the lower receiver to specifically accommodate the 6.8 SPC cartridge. The Six8 receiver features a magazine well that is both longer and wider than a standard M4's. The new receiver changed the geometry to allow for improved feeding and reliability in all conditions. The Six8 receiver also features LWRC's new IC architecture to include fully ambidextrous controls. As its name implies, the IC receiver was initially developed to meet the U.S. military's Individual Carbine solicitation. The controls consist of a safety and bolt lock that are mirrored on both sides of the receiver. The ambidextrous magazine release features a wide paddle that is recessed to prevent inadvertent activation. LWRC also designed a beefy charging handle that is larger and fully ambidextrous.

The dimensions of the new receiver required a newly designed magazine. LWRC initially worked on developing a specific magazine for the new rifle. However, given the scope of the contract, the company wisely decided to partner with Magpul Industries. Magpul developed a PMAG that is specifically designed for the dimensions of the LWRC magazine well. The Six8 magazine is distinguishable from the 5.56mm PMAG both visually and by feel, and a newly designed follower enhances reliability. The most noticeable differences of the 6.8 SPC magazine are its red follower and the red tab on the baseplate.

Both the upper and lower receivers are forged and then struck twice, once before and once after being heat-treated. This processing is known in the industry as "coining," and it allows LWRC to maintain extremely tight tolerances. The lower features a flared magazine well for faster reloads and a magazine stop to eliminate over-insertion. Like other LWRC rifles, the Six8 PSD features a patented, self-regulating, short-stroke piston system. The design eliminates the gas and carbon buildup in the receiver and bolt carrier group, and enhances reliability while reducing recoil and muzzle rise. Even with the piston system, LWRC rifles retain substantial parts commonality with traditional direct-impingement rifles.



It's easy to access the piston system. Just loosen two screws and remove the top portion of the handguard.





LEFT: LWRC equips the Six8 SPR with a heavy-duty charging handle as well as its Skirmish sights, including an adjustable rear sight that folds flat when not in use. RIGHT: The carbine features ambidextrous controls and a Magpul MIAD pistol grip.

Users can access the piston by loosening two retaining screws and removing the top portion of the rail assembly. The design captures the retaining screws and allows for easy maintenance in the field.

The Monoforge upper receiver was first introduced in 2011. It's a low-profile design that is void of the legacy "cheese grater" rails. Instead, threaded holes run the length of the 3, 6, and 9 o'clock axes, and users can install rail sections where needed. This allows the user to configure the rifle for specific needs without having the bulk and weight of excessive rails. The design also eliminated obnoxious threaded backplates required in some designs. All LWRC rifles come with two 3-inch rail sections for accessories and a shorter rail that accepts a quick-detach (QD) swivel for slings.

MULTIPLE MISSIONS

LWRC recently introduced a 16.1-inch-barreled version of the Six8 for the commercial market. The Six8 SPR has all the features of the PSD version with the exception of the select-fire function. The 16-inch, 1-in-10-inch-twist barrel is forged from a 41V45 steel alloy blank using high-pressure rotary hammers. This process results in near perfect rifling that is molecularly stronger than other forms of rifling. The barrels are also treated with NiCorr, which is "more lubricious, harder wearing, and more heat and corrosion resistant than normal hard chrome." What all that means is that shooters can expect longer barrel life than that from standard mil-spec barrels. The one-piece bolt carrier is designed to operate with the short-stroke piston, and it's also coated with a proprietary nickel coating to prevent corrosion and provide increased lubricity. The Six8 SPR uses an LWRC-made, high-efficiency four-prong flash suppressor that was designed for the PSD.

The Six8 SPR is equipped with LWRC's excellent Skirmish iron sights. The rear sight is a square post with four different aperture diameters that can be selected by rotating the post. This design allows the user to fold the rear sight regardless of what aperture is selected. The front sight consists of a post that is adjustable for elevation and features a semi-circular guard that is reminiscent of the sights found on an MP5.

I recently received a Six8 SPR for evaluation. The rifle had a black finish and was equipped with a Magpul MIAD pistol grip and LWRC's "SOPMOD"-type stock. The single-stage trigger broke cleanly at 7.81 pounds. While designed for law enforcement and military use, the Six8 is an ideal sporting rifle for those who want to take advantage of the 6.8 SPC in an AR platform.

I installed a Leupold 2.5-8x36mm Mark 4 M2 tactical scope with a LaRue SPR mount for the 100-yard accuracy testing. The TMR reticle and brilliant light-gathering capabilities make the Mark 4 series of scopes ideal for the sportsman. I have found this particular scope to be extremely versatile, and it has become my go-to glass for any AR evaluation. It has also proven to be very well suited for hunting.



LWRC's flip-up Skirmish front sight has semi-circular "wings" that protect the elevation-adjustable sight post.

PERFORMANCE

LWRC SIX8 SPR

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Federal 90 Bonded SP	2,831	0.55
Hornady 110 V-MAX	2,564	0.90
Hornady 120 SST	2,479	1.14

NOTE: Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

HUNT READY

We tested the Six8 with two Hornady loads and the Federal load developed for the Six8 PSD contract. The Hornady 110-grain V-MAX averaged 2,564 fps while the 120-grain SST averaged 2,479 fps. Federal partnered with LWRC to

"While designed for law enforcement and military use, the Six8 is an ideal sporting rifle for those who want to take advantage of the 6.8 SPC in an AR platform."

develop a 90-grain Bonded Soft Point. Testing showed the 90-grain to be ideal for defensive and protective detail missions. During our testing, the Federal load averaged 2,831 fps. We attached one of the rail sections at the 6 o'clock position and mounted an Atlas bipod for accuracy testing. At 100 yards, the Federal load produced a group that measured 0.55 inches. By comparison, the 110-grain V-MAX produced a 0.9-inch group, and the 120-grain SST group measured 1.14 inches. In our experience, the 1-in-10-inch-twist barrel clearly performed better with the lighter 90-grain load.

The rifle arrived just in time for whitetail season. I loaned the rifle to my son for opening weekend. Using the Federal 90-grain load, he harvested two cull does that both weighed about 125 pounds. The first was standing at an odd angle at just 100 yards, requiring a shot to the base of the skull. The doe dropped in her tracks without even a flinch! The second doe presented a broadside shot at 50 yards or so. The round entered high on the right shoulder at a downward angle and exited on the left side, just below the centerline. The 90-grain load produced massive damage and a significant exit signature. The doe ran less than 30 yards before collapsing. Any doubts about the effectiveness of the Federal 90-grain load have been put to rest. I look forward to tracking down some hogs with the Six8.

LWRC's versatile Six8 SPR represents the latest in AR-platform design, engineering and features. It is equally at home in a patrol vehicle, an MRAP or a deer stand. Federal's participation in the original Six8 PSD contract has also resulted in an increased availability of 6.8 SPC ammunition on the commercial market. For more information, visit lwrc.com or call 410-901-1348.

SPECIFICATIONS

LWRC SIX8 SPR

CALIBER:	6.8 SPC
BARREL:	16.1 inches
OA LENGTH:	32-35.25 inches
WEIGHT:	7.25 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	LWRC Compact, collapsible
SIGHTS:	Skirmish front and rear
ACTION:	LWRC short-stroke gas piston
FINISH:	Hardcoat anodized black
CAPACITY:	30+1, 10+1
MSRP:	$2,499





I'VE TESTED SEVERAL Bravo Company Manufacturing (BCM) rifles over the years, and it has always been a pleasure. **These are reliable, accurate and well-balanced weapons that are built for hard use. Many professionals choose BCM rifles, and for good reason: They can withstand the harshest conditions.**

Each rifle's internals are properly tested for strength and fit; the barrels are made from high-grade steel that is both high-pressure (HP) and magnetic-particle (MP) tested. The barrels are also contoured to strike a nice balance between weight, longevity and accuracy. The rifles have 5.56mm chambers and use M4 feed ramps for smooth operation with most commercial and mil-spec ammunition. Assembled with extreme attention to detail, BCM rifles rival many custom or semi-custom builds at half the price. Finally, the company offers excellent customer service. Put it all together and it's hard to go wrong with BCM.

RECCE FIREPOWER

BCM's RECCE series rifles are highly regarded in the industry, and the company offers both 14.5- and 16-inch-barreled versions as the RECCE-14 and RECCE-16, respectively. AR rifles utilizing 14.5-inch barrels with pinned muzzle devices have become pretty popular recently, but I prefer a 16-inch barrel that allows me to install various flash suppressors, muzzle brakes or sound suppressors without the need for filling out NFA paperwork. BCM's new RECCE-16 KMR-A, with its Flat Dark Earth Cerakote finish, certainly fits the bill.

Starting with 7075-T6 forged receivers, the upper houses a 16-inch, government-profile barrel with a 1-in-7-inch twist rate. The bore and chamber are chrome lined for longevity and consistent operation. The muzzle sports 1/2x28 threading and comes capped with a BCM Gunfighter Mod 0 compensator. Surrounding the barrel and mid-length gas system is BCM's slim, 13-inch-long KeyMod Rail-Alpha (KMR-A) handguard, which features a long Picatinny top rail and KeyMod slots along the sides and bottom for accessories.

Internally, the bolt, machined from mil-spec Carpenter 158 steel, has been HP and MP tested. The tool-steel extractor uses a proven BCM spring. The hardened, chrome-lined gas key is properly staked using Grade 8 fasteners.

The lower receiver houses an ALG Defense combat trigger and mil-spec internals. More features include BCM's Gunfighter Mod 3 pistol grip, enlarged triggerguard and Gunfighter Mod 0 buttstock, all in black to contrast nicely with the Flat Dark Earth receivers. The 7075-T6 receiver extension, or buffer tube, houses a USGI H-buffer and spring. Rounding out the system, my test rifle included a KeyMod sling mount, a Gunfighter Mod 4 charging handle, a QD endplate and a set of BCM flip-up iron sights.

BRAVO'S NEW ALPHA DOG

BCM's FDE-dressed RECCE-16 KMR-A is born to compete, defend and hunt!

BY DAVID BAHDE

BCM's ARs lead the pack with extreme durability, and the new RECCE-16 KMR-A continues that tradition. Shown with a Trijicon VCOG, a SureFire Scout light, Dueck Defense RTS sights and a Zero Bravo hand stop.

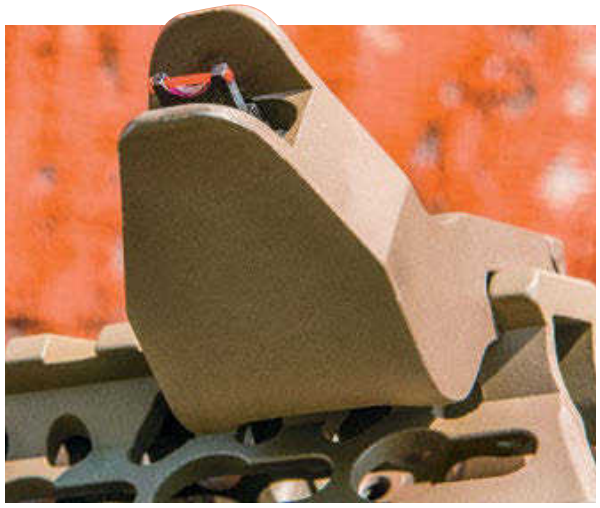


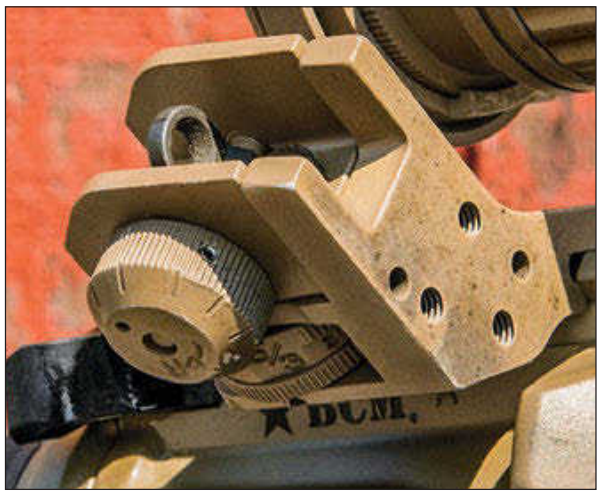
Paired with Trijicon's tank-tough VCOG scope, the RECCE-16 KMR-A ran flawlessly with all of the test ammunition out to 400 yards.

SPECIFICATIONS

BCM RECCE-16 KMR-A

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32.5-35.5 inches
WEIGHT:	6.1 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	Flip-up front and rear
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Flat Dark Earth Cerakote
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$1,475





The top rail provides plenty of space for mounting optics and sights. The author added Dueck Defense's adjustable, offset Rapid Transition Sights to quickly hammer targets at close range.

FLAT DARK ADD-ONS

I planned on using the RECCE-16 KMR-A for some upcoming events, including a 3-Gun match. So, I needed foolproof accessories, most of which were luckily in a matching Flat Dark Earth finish. For targeting, I installed a Trijicon VCOG using a segmented-circle reticle designed for 77-grain ammo, as well as a set of offset iron sights. Next I installed Zero Bravo's Reversible Hand Stop (RHS) for a solid grip in hand and on barricades.

To carry the RECCE-16 KMR-A, I added a Blue Force Gear Vickers sling, and for lighting I installed a SureFire Scout flashlight in a Haley Strategic Partners Thorntail offset mount. BCM's KeyMod rail panels were added to the handguard for a solid, comfortable grip, and I also added an ambidextrous, 45-degree safety from Battle Arms Development (BAD).

DESERT SHOOTOUT

The RECCE-16 KMR-A's accuracy was excellent, especially with Black Hills' 77-grain TMK ammunition. Since this is also is my preferred competition load, I was rather pleased and used it for zeroing work. Starting at 25 yards, I adjusted the scope from its last platform and fired a five-shot group. The group was barely measurable, about as close to "same hole" as it gets. Not every rifle shoots the Tipped MatchKing round well, even at that range. Moving back to 50 yards, the group opened up to 0.4 inches, and at 100 yards, this ammo produced the best five-shot group, which measured 0.74 inches. The RECCE-16 KMR-A was no slouch with any of the match-grade ammunition, but it really seemed to shoot this round exceptionally well.



BCM bolt carrier groups are properly magnetic-particle and high-pressure tested for optimum durability and longevity.



The lower receiver features BCM's Gunfighter Mod 3 grip and an ALG Defense trigger. The author added the ambidextrous safety.

Moving from 50 to 400 yards, I confirmed the Trijicon VCOG's BDC reticle on 6-inch steel targets. Each resulted in a resounding *ding* on steel. With no wind, it was easy to get hits on target—almost too easy. Find your range, hold properly and press the trigger. This is one of the reasons I prefer the VCOG on carbines for competitions or duty. It is fast, clear and very accurate. Properly zeroed, the BDC reticle is one of the most accurate I've used. It even worked well out to 600 yards, getting the most out of this chambering. The VCOG is also very rugged, making it practical for duty applications. At 1X magnification, the illuminated reticle works well, even in bright daylight.

Working around various range obstacles, the RECCE-16 KMR-A was well balanced, lightweight and very handy. With its 16-inch barrel, it ran well in my range's shoothouse as well as around barricades. The barrel threading is also a huge plus, making it easy to swap between a flash or sound suppressor for duty uses, or a muzzle brake for competitions. This is an excellent example of a versatile rifle perfectly suited to several missions, including duty, competition or self-defense.

As I expected, the rifle ran flawlessly. It digested everything I fed it, including three different frangible rounds and today's common "green" ammunition. Southern Ballistic Research's 50-grain copper/polymer green ammo ejected perfectly while maintaining tight groupings. I also used the RECCE-16 KMR-A to great effect during a training course with some 40-grain frangible rounds that have caused issues with other rifles.

ALWAYS BET ON BCM

It's always a pleasure to test BCM rifles, and they never surprise me. Designed to last a lifetime and built with extreme attention to detail, they just flat-out work.

Direct-impingement rifles remain the best choice where simplicity and assured operation are key. For most professionals, the original direct-impingement design remains the best system. These rifles are affordable, have few moving parts and are easy to maintain. BCM's direct-impingement rifles are some of the best available. They use true mil-spec parts, making repairs in the field easy. They also work with a broad range of ammunition. The RECCE-16 KMR-A's mid-length gas system provides a soft-shooting rifle that runs a bit cooler and is generally more reliable. BCM parts are designed with users in mind, making them ready to go right out of the box.

All in all, this is an excellent rifle perfect for most any user. The Flat Dark Earth Cerakote finish makes it look better while enhancing the carbine's corrosion resistance. If you are looking for a duty gun, a competition machine or just a fantastic target rifle, give the BCM RECCE-16 KMR-A a very close look. You won't be disappointed. For more information, visit bravocompanyusa.com or call 877-272-8626.

PERFORMANCE

BCM RECCE-16 KMR-A

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Barnes 69 Match	2,880	0.89
Black Hills 77 TMK	2,720	0.74
Silver State Armory 77 OTM	2,650	1.10
Winchester 69 Match	2,920	0.95

NOTE: Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

RECCE-11 KMR PISTOL

Many shooters like AR-platform pistols for a number of roles: home defense, packed in a truck or just fun on the range. Of course, they offer ballistic capabilities, like penetration, that far surpass that of most traditional handguns. Properly deployed, they can be quite accurate and provide significant firepower in the right situations. BCM's new RECCE-11 KMR pistol offers proven quality, dependability and serious durability.

The upper and lower receivers are forged from 7075-T6 aluminum. The pistol features an 11.5-inch, chrome-lined barrel that is HP and MP tested and expertly installed. The barrel is also threaded and comes capped with a BCM Gunfighter Mod 0 compensator. The barrel and gas system are covered by a BCM KMR-10 handguard. A hardened bolt and proven mil-spec parts round out the build.

BCM includes its Gunfighter Mod 4 charging handle, Mod 3 pistol grip, enlarged triggerguard and QD endplate. Built to the demanding standards for accuracy and dependability BCM has become famous for, the RECCE-11 KMR pistol is an excellent addition to anyone's arsenal.

SPECS

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	11 inches
OA LENGTH:	27 inches
WEIGHT:	5.1 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	BCM Gunfighter Mod 3
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$1,490





Game-Taking 6.5 GRENDEL

Alexander Arms' whitetail- and hog-ready AR brings added power and precision!

BY JAY LANGSTON • **PHOTOS** BY OLEG VOLK

ANYTHING BUT A STOCK 16-inch-barreled AR chambered in .223 Remington/5.56mm NATO often takes months after it is ordered to be delivered to your local gun shop. These are the times we live in, where the demand for semi-custom rifles is so great that production backlogs and long waits are common. One rifle that is well worth the wait, if any, is an Alexander Arms model chambered for the 6.5 Grendel.

When I received this assignment to review this Alexander Arms rifle chambered in the "new" 6.5 Grendel, I wasn't unfamiliar with the rifle or cartridge. Over the past few years, I have tested and evaluated five different AR-platform rifles chambered in this cartridge that were built by four different manufacturers. As a fan of .264-caliber bullets for long-range shooting and hunting whitetail-sized game, it didn't take very many rounds downrange to realize this cartridge was a winner.

This year marks the 12th anniversary of the 6.5 Grendel. In January 2003, Bill Alexander and Lapua engineer Janne Phohjoispaa began working together to design and finalize the dimensions of the 6.5 Grendel cartridge. Their initial thoughts of basing the cartridge on the PPC case took a backseat to basing it on the .220 Russian, owing to the fact that Lapua was already producing the .220 Russian brass. Their new case design was dramatically different than an earlier PPC-based cartridge Arne Brennan and Alexander initially designed. The final version placed the cartridge shoulder differently and increased case capacity. Keeping in mind that it would feed in autoloaders, the case neck was beefed up, too. In November 2003, Bill Alexander placed his first order for 50,000 cases from Lapua and JGS produced the first chamber reamers for the Grendel. A few weeks later, Alexander introduced the 6.5 Grendel at an industry trade show.

Bill Alexander, founder and chief product designer for the company that wears his name, started Alexander Arms based on his belief in the design of the .50 Beowulf cartridge. Bill has worked in the armament industry his entire professional career. He spent time with the British Army designing artillery armor and small weapons. He then went on to several classified projects for both the British and the U.S. federal government. He started Alexander Arms in 2001.

SPECIFICATIONS

ALEXANDER ARMS TACTICAL FLUTED

CALIBER:	6.5 Grendel
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	36.5 inches
WEIGHT:	6.5 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Magpul MOE
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	26+1
MSRP:	$1,250

GRENDEL'S MARK

As with many new "wildcat" cartridges that are transitioning into the mainstream, expansion into other ammunition companies offers it more exposure and legitimacy. In February 2007, Wolf Performance Ammunition introduced a 123-grain soft point and a 120-grain multi-purpose, hollow-point boat-tail (HPBT) load in its Gold line. Two and a half years later, Hornady joined the effort by producing 6.5 Grendel factory ammunition, bullets dedicated for the cartridge and cartridge cases.

The final leap for the 6.5 Grendel came in February 2012, when the Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers Institute (SAAMI) adopted the 6.5 Grendel as an official cartridge. As a result of the cartridge's official recognition, Alexander Arms had to relinquish the trademark "6.5 Grendel."

"One of the primary purposes of trademarking the name was to protect the integrity of the original cartridge design," Bill Alexander said. "With the adoption of the 6.5 Grendel cartridge standard by SAAMI, the design is now protected and any confusion in the marketplace as to the specification of the cartridge has been eliminated."

> **Well-constructed bullets driven at the velocities possible with a short-barreled AR put deer down quickly.**



Alexander Arms' Tactical Fluted Rifle is built to harness the powerful, SAAMI-certified 6.5 Grendel cartridge in a package tough and accurate enough for hog and deer hunts in the backwoods. Shown with a Burris 4.5-14x42mm AR scope.

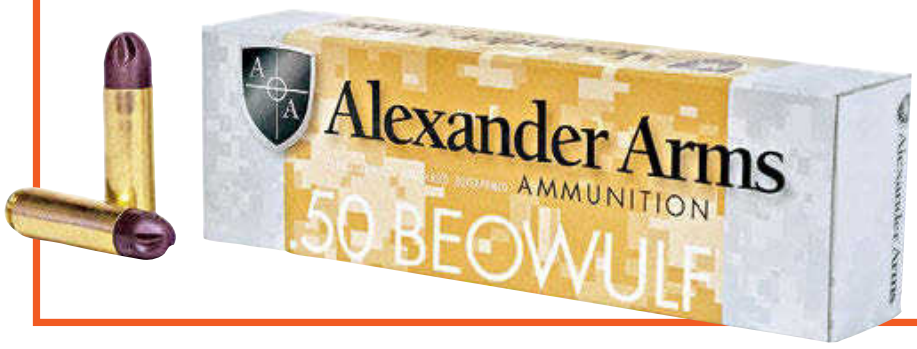
PolyCase .50 Beowulf ARX Ammo

PolyCase Ammunition and Alexander Arms announced recently that they have teamed up to offer PolyCase's ARX projectile in a .50 Beowulf variant. The .50 Beowulf, developed and produced by Alexander Arms for the AR platform, is designed to deliver exceptional stopping power at short to moderate ranges. PolyCase's ARX is an advanced, injection-molded copper/polymer bullet that transfers maximum energy to targets without expanding.

"We are thrilled to be working with Alexander Arms to offer the ARX projectile in the .50 Beowulf caliber," said Paul Lemke, founder and CEO of PolyCase Ammunition. "This caliber is the ultimate big-bore semi-auto rifle cartridge. When you combine the massive energy of the .50 Beowulf with the patent-pending stopping power of the ARX, you have a defensive and hunting rifle cartridge that is second to none."

Alexander Arms' Bill Alexander said, "This projectile [the ARX] is going to push the limits of what the .50 Beowulf can do. In our testing we found that the ARX transfers a maximum amount of energy with minimal overpenetration, resulting in one of the most effective defensive and short- to medium-range hunting cartridges on the market."

New .50 Beowulf ARX ammo is available at alexanderarms.com and select retailers.



Through the standardization process, Alexander didn't need to modify the chamber dimensions for the cartridge, as he feared. Hence the "new" 6.5 Grendel, mentioned previously, is its upgraded status within the firearms industry. "When we did the cartridge, we never thought it would get as far as SAAMI," Alexander said. "We did the trademark and hoped one day that there would be an acceptance. When it got to SAAMI, we got into a bit of a kerfuffle. Is there anything we need to do? We've got that double-throat angle thing, and we got nervous that SAAMI would throw it back to us. They said the .303 Enfield and the .318 Rigby had the same thing, and they just signed off on the thing. It was drama free. Their biggest hurdle was that they didn't want to approve a trademarked cartridge. We ourselves and Hornady were very pleased. All those early adopters that put their money up [to buy 6.5 Grendel rifles] got the best of it."

Over the past few seasons, the 6.5 Grendel has proven itself as a fantastic whitetail cartridge. Well-constructed bullets driven at the velocities possible with a short-barreled AR put deer down quickly. I've used it to kill deer ranging from big-bodied mature bucks to doing "doe patrol" to fill the freezer. This rifle was easy to carry last season, and helped put meat on the table. Last season, one of my Mississippi friends asked me to help reduce his farm's doe numbers to assist with herd management. In addition to culling a few does, it did a good job hammering wild hogs that had been invading his lush food plots and destroying them.

GUN DETAILS

Alexander Arms' 6.5 Grendel Tactical Fluted Rifle wears a 16-inch, fully fluted, chrome-lined barrel. The barrel is housed within a free-floating composite handguard, which helps cut weight and makes this rifle a breeze to carry. The muzzle has 9/16x24 threading with an A2-style flash suppressor installed.

The handguard on this rifle is one of my favorites for a hunting AR. Its advanced G10 construction offers heat, cold and chemical resistance while being lightweight and easy to grip. Its upper vents help dissipate barrel heat and reduce mirage. The handguard has a 2-inch diameter, which requires the use of a low-profile gas block. It's also free-floated and includes a 7075 aluminum barrel nut. The handguard, 9 inches long overall, also has corrosion-resistant, threaded inserts for attaching 3-inch Picatinny rail sections per user requirements. The rails attach to the threaded inserts via Allen-head screws.



Hornady's 123-grain cartridges are plenty sufficient for taking down whitetail-sized game.

PERFORMANCE

ALEXANDER ARMS TACTICAL FLUTED

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Alexander Arms 120 Nosler	2,510	1.41
Hornady 123 A-MAX	2,502	1.13
HANDLOAD		
Hornady 123 A-MAX/BL-C2	2,530	0.92
Hornady 129 SST/BL-C2	2,370	1.21

NOTE: Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

Aside from the technical specs, I like the handguard on this rifle for practical reasons. While hunting in cold conditions, it doesn't work like a heat sink and freeze bare hands like a metal handguard. The composite plastic handguard is lighter than an aluminum handguard, saving a few ounces that you have to lug around.

This rifle came equipped with Alexander Arms' tactical trigger, which is suitable for close-quarters battle (CQB), mid-range work as well as hunting. It is also well suited for use in designated marksman rifles. The trigger is a non-adjustable single-stage unit, and is not considered a match trigger. According to Bill Alexander, the tactical trigger unit has been designed specifically for field use and does not share a common heritage with a target trigger. For this reason, it is not recommended for target-type shooting, although it may be used with some success in this discipline. The trigger is basically a single-stage unit with a bushing-mounted disconnector, which is adjustable for engagement and overtravel. The pull weight and disconnector engagement are fixed to ensure durability during hard use and inclement environments.

The trigger bow is intentionally narrower than those commonly found on target-type triggers. This serves as an accurate reference for the trigger finger if the unit is used with gloves or in cold or wet conditions. The pull weight allows manipulation of the trigger with gloves while minimizing the possibility of discharging a round unexpectedly in the manner of a target trigger. In extreme cold conditions, the trigger can still be used with mitts with the triggerguard pivoted down, although the manufacturer does not recommend this practice. This rifle's trigger breaks clean with minimal overtravel. The peak weight of the trigger on my test rifle was a consistent 4 pounds. Alexander attributes the long life for this fire control group to its Thin Dense Chrome (TDC) coating, which prevents corrosion, as well as an IonBond coating that increases the life of the part, reduces friction and improves performance and reliability by reducing wear.

ROUNDS DOWNRANGE

Since I wanted to set up this rifle as a woods gun for whitetails, I mounted a Vortex 1-4x24 Razor HD in a set of Vortex 30mm rings. I shot several five-shot groups from a bench at 100 yards to get a feel for the rifle and retest loads that I have fired in several 6.5 Grendel rifles.

The first test load was Alexander Arms' own 120-grain Nosler ammunition. This one averaged 2,510 fps, and posted a best group measuring 1.41 inches. I'm sure I could have improved the group size if I had used an optic with higher magnification. The next load was Hornady's 123-grain A-MAX load, which averaged 2,502 fps. Its best 100-yard group measured 1.13 inches.

My favorite handload for this rifle uses Hornady's same 123-grain A-MAX bullet driven by 31.5 grains of BL-C2 powder. This load averages 2,530 fps and posted a sub-MOA group of 0.92 inches. My next handload was a 129-grain Hornady SST atop 29.8 grains of BL-C2 powder. Its best group measured 1.21 inches.

In summary, the configuration of this rifle and cartridge makes for a great whitetail rig in most places this species is hunted. It's lightweight and efficient, and you can be sure that this rifle will continue to accompany me on hunts for years to come. For more information, call 540-639-8356 or visit alexanderarms.com.









DIY

DEER SLAYER

How to build a Mega-versatile 6.5 Creedmoor tack driver for the backwoods and beyond.

BY JAY LANGSTON

One aspect of farming that is conducive to acceptable crop harvests is managing the number of whitetail deer in your area. It provides a fun alternative to pursuing a mature buck and it puts meat in your freezer. Ample shot opportunities also allow me to try several different firearms and load combinations each season to learn their effectiveness, or lack thereof. Over the past decade, I've become a fan of long-range hunting rifles. Typically, these are stiff-barreled bolt actions. Lately, however, I've learned that a well-built self-loader can be as accurate as a custom bolt action. With this knowledge in mind, I set out to build a flat-shooting 6.5 Creedmoor on an AR-platform MATEN receiver set from Mega Arms.

STURDY FOUNDATION

My custom 6.5 Creedmoor began with Mega's MKM KeyMod upper receiver and its matching ambidextrous lower. The receivers are milled from a solid billet of 7075-T6 aluminum with distinctive contours. The receivers and handguard feel quite sturdy, with their combined weight of 42 ounces disassembled. Of note, the MATEN upper and lower receivers accept a wide variety of .308 components. Included in this new platform are an upper receiver, a lower receiver, a billet charging handle, a threaded bolt catch pin, takedown pins, an ejection port cover and an upper receiver tensioning screw. When assembled, the upper and lower receivers lock up tight as a vault thanks to close manufacturing tolerances and the tensioning screw.

Mega's billet upper and lower have been designed to be the most versatile and compatible platform available, which is evidenced by the wide variety of other manufacturers' components that fit this receiver set. The MATEN comes standard with laser-engraved T-markings on the top Picatinny rail. An integrated triggerguard adds functionality and strength, and the included billet charging handle features an anti-slip surface for an improved grip.

As mentioned, the MATEN's capabilities make it an AR builder's dream. These receiver sets are designed to accept any AR-style .308 barrels and bolts, which means you can use your AR-10/Noveske or SR-25/DPMS components. Mega Arms recommends using the same manufacturer for your barrel and bolt, and the company suggests that "assembly should always be done by a qualified gunsmith, using the proper headspacing gauges."

Aside from Mega Arms' monolithic upper receiver, the company offers the two-piece MML (Mega M-LOK) and MKM uppers, the latter of which I used for my build. Both are machined to accept Mega's lightweight aluminum handguards. These handguard attach to the upper receiver via an octagonal male/female orientation. Once the upper and handguard are assembled, 12 screws tightly attach the two units rigidly together.

BUILDING IT UP

My parts list for the MATEN build leaned heavily toward components from JP Enterprises, including a JPE






The author's son, Wilson, lent a helping hand by installing a JP Enterprises Supermatch barrel into the Mega Arms upper, then JPE's gas block and blue Thermal Dissipator. The final touch was adding a Magpul PRS stock.

Main Photo Oleg Volk



The author tested the custom 6.5 Creedmoor rifle's accuracy from prone with an Accu-Shot monopod, an Atlas bipod, a Trijicon 5-20x50mm AccuPoint scope and an AAC Cyclone sound suppressor.

Supermatch barrel chambered in 6.5 Creedmoor. The medium-contour, 416R stainless barrel measures 22 inches long and features a 1-in-8-inch twist rate as well as 5/8x24 threading. This premium barrel is lead lapped, air gauged and cryogenically treated for excellent accuracy, minimal thermal drift and extended longevity. An EnhancedBolt individually headspaced to the barrel from JP Enterprises was also included.

The first step in installing the barrel is to apply a thin coat of lithium grease on the barrel where it slides into the Mega Arms upper receiver, carefully assuring that the barrel's alignment pin indexes into the receiver's alignment slot. More lithium grease was applied to the MATEN's barrel nut to keep it from galling when torqued down. I attached the supplied Mega Arms barrel nut wrench to a 0.5-inch torque wrench and set it to 65 foot-pounds of torque.

The next step in the assembly was to install the gas block and center it with the supplied marking screw. This left a faint mark on the barrel as an index point. I placed the barrel in a vise block and used a drill press to drill a slight dimple. When the gas block was replaced, the final setscrew was used to help lock the part in place on the barrel. The rifle-length gas system is managed with a JPE JPGS-8 low-profile adjustable gas block. I also installed a blue JPE Thermal Dissipator to match my taste. Next I installed the MATEN handguard and added a short KeyMod rail on the bottom to accommodate a bipod.

In keeping with the other JPE parts, I selected an LMOS (Low-Mass Operating System) bolt carrier group and a Silent Captured Spring. JPE's LMOS is a departure from .308 AR-type bolt carrier assemblies. It weighs only 14.7 ounces, and counteracting the lighter bolt assembly is a heavier recoil spring in the Silent Captured Spring. The benefit of the spring set is that it eliminates the characteristic "twang" when you pull the trigger.

Next on the agenda was a stock. I installed a mil-spec, rifle-length receiver extension and attached a Magpul PRS stock to it. This stock is designed for the longer charging handle throw of .308 platforms. The PRS is adjustable for both comb height and length of pull via machined-aluminum adjustable knobs with positive-locking click detents. The stock also offers a bottom rail for a monopod, and I attached an Accu-Shot monopod to match the Atlas bipod up front for shooting stability.

The supplied single-stage Mega Tactical Trigger offers adjustments to minimize overtravel and trigger creep. It features a wide leading edge for comfort and aesthetics. My test sample broke cleanly at 4.5 pounds.

ROUNDS DOWNRANGE

At the range, I tested the rifle with and without an Advanced Armament Corporation (AAC) Cyclone suppressor. A proper optic was only befitting, so I mounted a Trijicon AccuPoint 5-20x50mm scope with a mil-dot reticle. Previous experience with high-ballistic-coefficient bullets and the velocity this rig was capable of producing led me to believe that I could use the mil dots as aiming points that closely corresponded with 100-yard increments.

To put the 6.5 Creedmoor build through its paces, I selected one factory load and did some experimenting with several handloads. Velocity data was collected with an Oehler 35P chronograph. I loaded up a Magpul 20-round magazine and got started. By the way, Mega Arms' receivers are compatible with any SR-25/DPMS-type magazine, such as those from Magpul Industries, Knight's Armament, CMMG and C Products.

The first load I tested was a 123-grain Hornady A-MAX driven by 38 grains of Reloader 15. I knew right away that this wasn't going to be this rifle's pet load, since the five-shot groups measured about 1.5 inches at 100 yards. The best group measured 1.24 inches. Things got decidedly better when I switched to a 110-grain Speer hollow point driven by 41 grains of Varget. This load produced a best five-shot group of 0.48 inches. The next load, featuring a 123-grain Sierra MatchKing and 39.2 grains of Varget, produced a 0.34-inch group.

I moved up in weight to a 140-grain Berger VLD driven by 42.8 grains of W760, which averaged 2,662 fps. With this combination, the smallest group measured 1.09 inches. The same powder charge driving a 140-grain A-MAX produced a 0.57-inch group. Off to a good start, I feel that this custom 6.5 Creedmoor rifle is capable of 0.25-MOA groups with a little more fine-tuning.

— *Continued on page 130*

SPECIFICATIONS

CUSTOM 6.5 CREEDMOOR

CALIBER:	6.5 Creedmoor
BARREL:	22 inches
OA LENGTH:	41.88 inches
WEIGHT:	10 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Magpul PRS
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	20+1
MSRP:	N/A

PERFORMANCE

CUSTOM 6.5 CREEDMOOR

HANDLOAD	POWDER	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Berger 140 VLD	42.8 W760	2,662	1.09
Hornady 123 A-MAX	38 Reloader 15	2,641	1.24
Sierra 123 MatchKing	39.2 Varget	2,710	0.34
Hornady 140 A-MAX	42.8 W760	2,673	0.57
Speer 100 HP	41 Varget	2,894	0.48

NOTE: Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.


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NO EXCUSES...
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• OVER A DOZEN MATCH-GRADE BARREL CONFIGURATIONS
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Shaolin Rifleworks is a custom shop that creates highly accurate ARs guaranteed to shoot tight groups, including the SRW-556R (shown with a Lucid L5 scope) and the SWR-300BP (shown with an Aimpoint Patrol Rifle Optic).

SHAOLIN SURE SHOTS

Custom 5.56mm, .308 and 300 BLK ARs that are guaranteed to kick sub-MOA tail!

BY DAVID KENIK

I met Cameron Bromley, the owner of Shaolin Rifleworks, at an informal gathering of gun scribes after an industry trade show last year. He introduced himself and his company by saying, "We make the most accurate ARs on the planet." I hesitated for a moment to absorb the boldness of his proclamation, and then commented on the potency of his boast. He invited me to his booth to look over his wares and offered to send me a rifle so I could see for myself.

Typically, most AR-15s are built to battle specifications, with somewhere between 1.5- to 2-MOA accuracy. There are many manufacturers who best that, and a few select companies specialize in high accuracy, so I was anxious to compare Shaolin's offerings. I stopped by Shaolin's booth the next day and noted that the actions and triggers on the company's rifles were unusually smooth and took Cameron up on his offer to send one to me for testing.

SHAOLIN STYLE

Shaolin Rifleworks is a rather new company, organized in 2013 and receiving its FFL in the beginning of 2014. Bromley and his crew's purpose was to build the most accurate rifles possible. In other words, to build guns that they wound enjoy themselves. In Cameron's mind, "the only interesting rifles are accurate rifles." Based out of Croydon, New Hampshire, the company has three owners, with Bromley doing all of the hand-fitting personally.

I consider Shaolin a "boutique" because the company does not mass-produce firearms. Rather, it specializes in building high-end, custom guns that are hand-machined, in-house, one at a time to a high quality standard, or, as the company puts it, "to an obsessive quality standard."

Shaolin Rifleworks offers rifles in .308 Winchester and 5.56mm NATO as well as carbines and pistols in 300 Blackout. If you are not looking for a full firearm, you can purchase separate uppers as well. Shaolin also has "Ready to Run" packages



that include optics and other accessories. If you don't see what you are looking for on the company's website, Shaolin will happily custom build anything you desire in the realm of the AR platform—that's the company's entire focus.

Shaolin's .308 and 5.56mm ARs come with 0.5-MOA accuracy guarantees. To back that up, every AR Shaolin builds is test-fired before it ships. To pass muster, they must shoot 0.5 MOA not just once, but five times. Shaolin's accuracy guarantee for its 300 Blackout firearms is 0.75 MOA.

DIGGING DEEPER

Shaolin builds its 5.56mm and .308 rifles on Mega Arms' ambidextrous, billet-crafted upper and lower receivers. Bromley stated that the company chose Mega Arms' receivers due to their nice design, high-quality workmanship and excellent fit and finish. I have several of Mega Arms' products in my own builds, and they are all top drawer.

Shaolin's stock 5.56mm and .308 offerings feature carbon-fiber and aluminum Precision Reflex handguards, Syrac Ordnance Gen II adjustable gas blocks, Precision Reflex MSTN Quiet Control brakes, Mega Arms ambidextrous charging handles with Badger Ordnance Gen II tactical latches, Magpul PRS buttstocks and Magpul MOE pistol grips. The bolt carrier groups on all Shaolin firearms are also nickel-boron plated for easy cleaning and enhance durability.

Shaolin's 300 Blackout carbines and pistols are built with side-charging upper receivers from Gibbz Arms, which, like their 5.56mm brethren, sit atop Mega Arms' GTR-3H ambidextrous, billet-crafted lower receiver.

While that list is certainly a who's who of quality components in the firearms world, the real key to Shaolin's rifle's accuracy is twofold: the barrel and the trigger. The barrel makes the rifle accurate, and a good trigger allows the shooter to attain that accuracy on a consistent basis.

For the barrels, Shaolin starts with Shilen chrome-moly blanks. Of course, Shilen makes some of the most accurate barrels on the market. However, I was surprised that Shaolin chose chrome-moly instead of stainless steel. I asked Bromley about that and he said that they tested both and the accuracy difference was negligible. Not only are the chrome-moly barrels highly accurate, but they also typically have longer lifespans than stainless steel barrels.

The barrel blank is precisely indicated before cutting, and that point is used as a reference for all other measurements to reduce tolerance stacking. The chambers are precisely cut to proper specifications. The bolt face is blueprinted to the barrel extension and lapped to fit truly 90 degrees to the bore. Shaolin's machining tolerances are held within 0.0005 inches.

As you probably already surmised, Shaolin uses a top-quality trigger, the Geissele G2S—but even that's not good enough for Shaolin. The company tunes each trigger for a 4.5-pound pull weight. Shaolin can also customize it to the shooter's weight preference. The Geissele triggers are also hand-polished for the smoothest possible trigger pull, and KNS anti-rotation trigger pins are added to remove any possible slop and ensure a perfectly repeatable trigger pull.

5.56MM FIGHTER

Shaolin's 5.56mm NATO barrels have 1-in-7-inch twist rates. Designed for heavier bullets, this twist rate will stabilize bullets weighing up to 90 grains and can handle the 70- to 77-grain bullets at just about any velocity.

Shaolin sent me its SRW-556R rifle as a test platform for this article. Both the upper and lower receivers were Cerakoted in Shaolin Bronze. The color is a special mix of Cerakote created by Shaolin Rifleworks. Combining the receivers with Flat Dark Earth furniture created a very striking visual.

The diameter of the Precision Reflex handguard is rather wide, but I found it easy enough to handle. The weight of the 5.56mm rifle's long, 20-inch barrel is offset by the light weight of the Precision Reflex carbon-fiber handguard, so the rifle is well balanced. The center of balance is near the forward end of the magazine well, so it does not feel front heavy at all, making it easy to maneuver.

SPECIFICATIONS

SHAOLIN SRW-556R

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	20 inches
OA LENGTH:	39.5 inches
WEIGHT:	9.25 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	Magpul MOE
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Shaolin Bronze
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$2,500

The average trigger pull on the test gun measured just over 5 pounds. The difference between my weight results and the factory's is most likely attributed to the fact that we used different measuring devices and techniques. Either way, the trigger felt great—smooth and crisp—and I found it to be very consistent. The action was just as smooth as those in the rifles I saw at the trade show.

ZEROING IN

Finally I headed to the range, anxious to see how well the SRW-556R would shoot. With a Lucid 6-24x50mm L5 scope mounted on the rifle, I used FMJ ammunition to zero the scope. I then switched to precision ammunition from Black Hills and Hornady for the accuracy testing. These two companies are always my go-to brands for testing a weapon's precision.

I shot from prone at 100 yards with a bipod and a shooting bag. As you can imagine with a full-sized rifle topped with a Precision Reflex muzzle brake, the recoil was light and easily manageable. Right off the bat, my first group with the 75-grain Black Hills match HP ammo was 0.47 inches, besting Shaolin's accuracy guarantee. The point of impact with the 75-grain Hornady Superformance Match BTHP ammunition was slightly higher, which is to be expected with the increased muzzle velocity. My groups were slightly



The compact, fast-handling SRW-300BP features a side-charging upper receiver from Gibbz Arms.

SHAOLIN'S 300 BLACKOUT PISTOL

Expecting just one rifle to review, I was surprised to find that Shaolin also sent me one of its SRW-300BP pistols as well. The receivers were Cerakoted in Shaolin Steel, a custom color created by Shaolin, while the furniture was OD green for a classy look.

Shaolin builds its 300 BLK pistols to the same exacting standards as its rifles. The pistol's Geissele G2S trigger was very similar to the SRW-556R's in terms of smoothness and pull weight. The pistol sports a Gibbz Arms side-charging upper fitted on an ambidextrous Mega Arms lower.

SPECS

CALIBER:	300 BLK
BARREL:	10.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	30 inches
WEIGHT:	6.18 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	Magpul MOE
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Shaolin Steel
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$2,500

CHARGING AHEAD: This was my first opportunity to actually use a side-charging AR. Taking the pistol out of the case, I played with the side-mounted charging handle while dry firing and liked it a lot. I found that the forward position of the charging handle is much easier to cycle compared to the traditional AR charging handle. I also noted that the charging handle was non-reciprocating, which is a major benefit for me, as I have had my thumb banged up by other guns with reciprocating, side-mounted charging handles when I was not paying adequate attention. I also tested the charging handle with

larger with the Hornady ammo, too, with the best measuring 0.72 inches. While not as tight as the Black Hills ammunition, it is still very impressive. Of course, every gun, regardless of manufacturer, has an ammunition preference. It just takes some testing to see which ammunition performs best in your rifle.

There's a big difference between buying a gun off the shelf and a custom rifle. With a custom gun, you get the parts that you want without having to buy one set of components and then spend more money on aftermarket parts. When you buy from Shaolin Rifleworks, you not only get a guaranteed highly accurate, custom-built rifle, but you also work directly with the machinist who will hand-build your rifle himself. For more information, visit shaolinrifleworks.com or call 603-863-0290.

PERFORMANCE

SHAOLIN SRW-556R

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Black Hills 75 Match HP	2,723	0.47
Hornady 75 Match BTHP	2,635	0.72

NOTE: Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

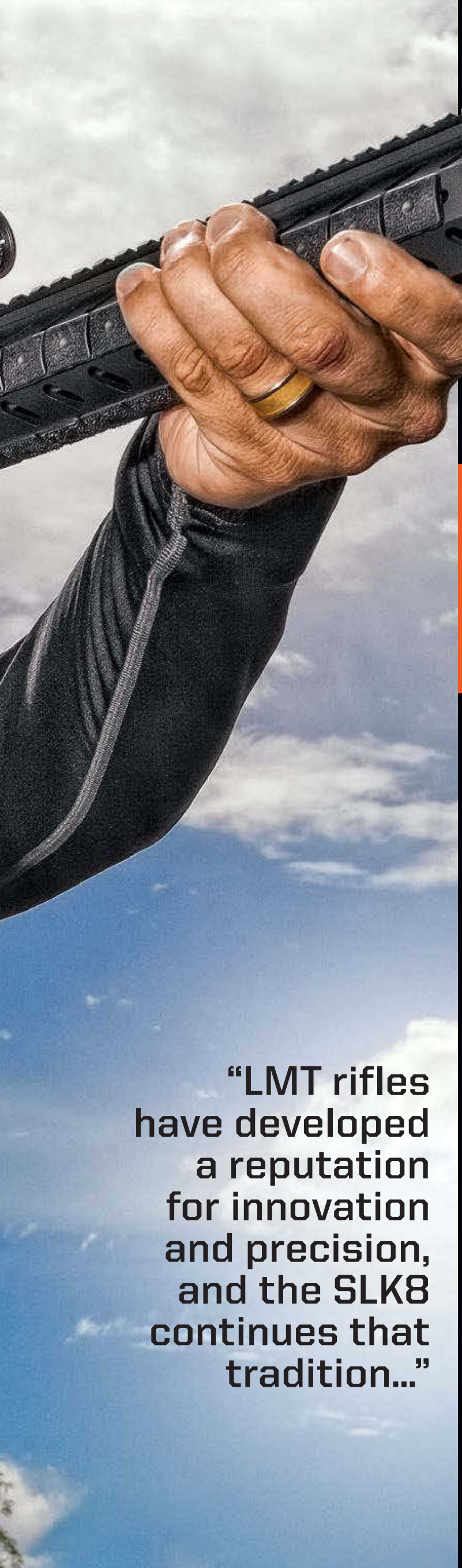
the pistol on my support side and found it very easy to manipulate with my right hand by rotating the pistol slightly to the right, much like the charging technique used on AK-47s, but rotated in the opposite direction.

BLACKOUT RANGE TIME: For testing, I fed the SRW-300BP some Jamison, Remington and Black Hills ammunition, and its reliability was perfect. The real surprise came on the 100-yard range. I attached the Lucid L5 scope, added a bipod and rigged up some alternative support to stabilize it for testing—not an easy task with an AR pistol. I blew Shaolin's 0.75-MOA guarantee away with 0.5-inch groups using Black Hills' 125-grain .300 Whisper OTM ammunition. Kudos to Shaolin Rifleworks and Black Hills ammunition!





Born to hit multiple targets with ease, LMT's 5.56mm SLK8 has several 3-Gun-ready enhancements, including a long handguard for an extended support-hand grip. Shown with a Bushnell Elite Tactical scope.



LMT's SLICK OPERATOR

Get a handle on the smoothest-shooting new 5.56mm on the block– THE SLK8!

BY JAY LANGSTON • **PHOTOS BY** STRAIGHT 8

Eugene Stoner's original AR design was introduced to fit Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara's "Whiz Kids" philosophy of flexible military responses to wage non-nuclear war against insurgents. A lightweight weapon that fired lighter-weight ammunition fit the bill for counterinsurgency operations in Vietnam. Previous infantry rifles required a modicum of hand fitting to perform well, but the AR's modularity allowed an easy swap-out of major parts in minutes.

Today's AR-platform rifles are just as versatile, with owners swapping out entire upper receivers to change calibers in little more time than it takes to read this sentence. All it takes is a few seconds to punch a couple of pins out to swap out upper receivers. Today, Picatinny rails make it easy to change out optics, too, and the abundance of aftermarket parts allows for personalization and specialization, another boon that makes the AR so likable.

"LMT rifles have developed a reputation for innovation and precision, and the SLK8 continues that tradition..."



LMT'S ADVANCES

Over the last few years, the U.S. military has pushed for upgrades to the AR platform to extend its length of service and fit other roles. This has made it attractive for firearms manufacturers to invest in improving the basic design, with a big government contract as its prize. One manufacturer, Lewis Machine & Tool (LMT), set out on a path that improved the AR design by creating a monolithic upper receiver with an integral forend. This design idea won LMT a patent. Going a step further, LMT combined a simple quick-change barrel capability into its monolithic receiver that's as simple as removing two large screws and replacing them once the barrel swap is accomplished.

A rigid union between the upper receiver and forend is critical to building an accurate AR. Several other factors come into play when dissecting a precision AR build, but it's a sure bet that if there's any play between the upper receiver, barrel shroud and forend attachment point, it won't shoot tight groups. LMT's monolithic upper receiver remedies this and offers one long stretch of continuous Picatinny rail that runs the length of the receiver and forend. Another accuracy-robbing feature of standard ARs is when an optic has two separate mounting points. If the scope bridges the forward end of the upper receiver and a separate forend rail, your groups will be erratic. So, LMT's monolithic design fixes this, too.

Many manufacturers have been moving away from bulky quad-rail handguards lately, and LMT's latest model, the SLK8, has a 13-inch forend with a full-length top rail while the sides and bottom are left smooth. Users can add rail sections where desired.

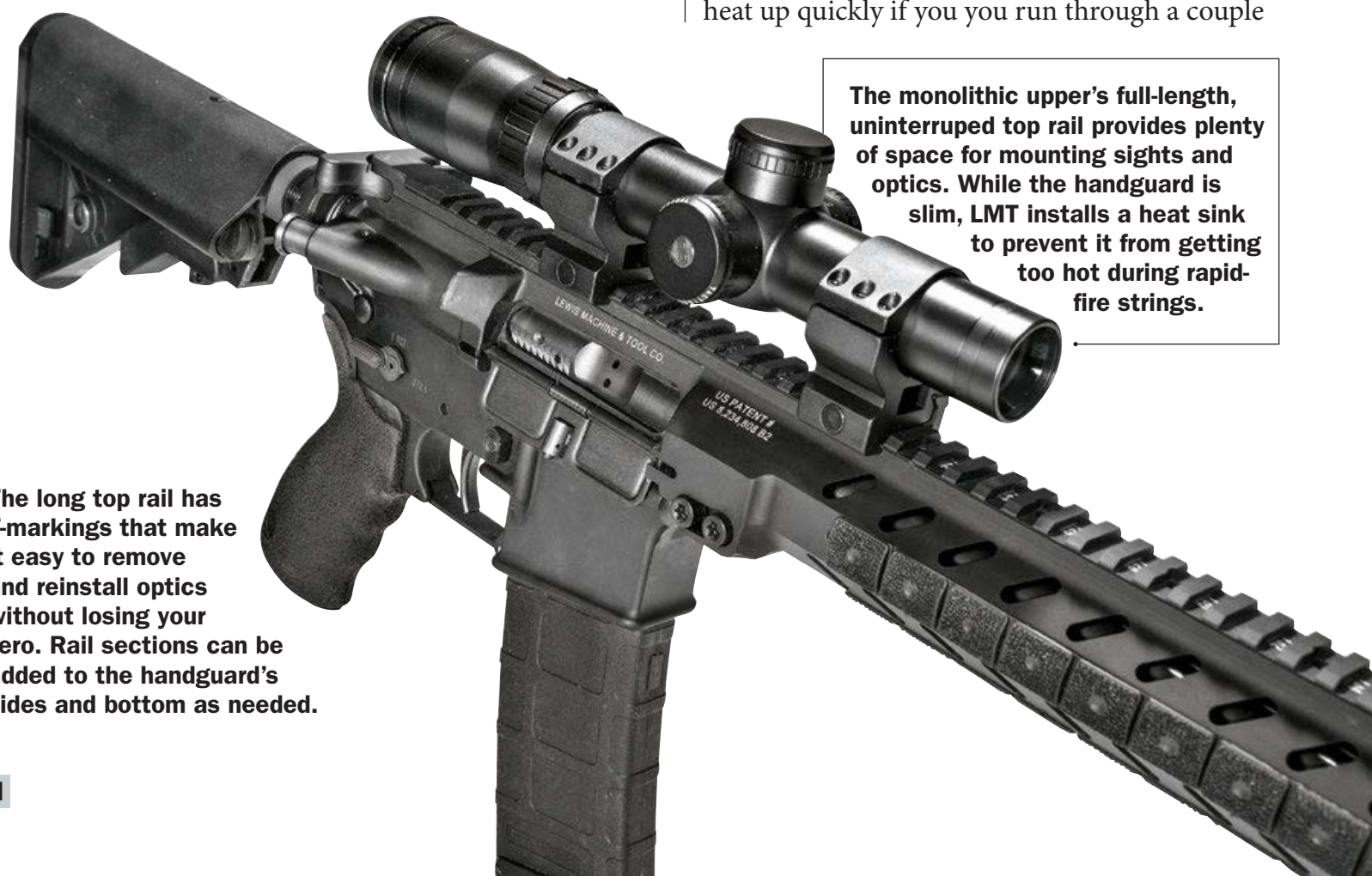
SPECIFICATIONS

LEWIS MACHINE & TOOL SLK8

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	33-36.25 inches
WEIGHT:	7.3 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	LMT SOPMOD
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$2,405

One of the areas where the SLK8 will shine is in 3-Gun competition and other shooting matches that require firing off-hand and variable support situations. I have watched several competitive shooters, and the manner in which they grip an AR while shooting is rather varied. One thing that I have noticed is that they often extend their support hand as far as possible along the forend. The SLK8's longer handguard offers more length to position the hand and also gives more options for resting the weapon for a steady shot. This longer handguard doesn't matter much if you only shoot from a bench or plink off-hand, but it comes in real handy if you need to find a solid rest quickly, like shooting around a barricade. Keeping the barrel off a solid object is important; otherwise you'll affect your precision.

The SLK8's new forend is just 1.5 inches wide, which fits my hands well. One downside to smaller handguards is that they typically heat up quickly if you you run through a couple



The monolithic upper's full-length, uninterruped top rail provides plenty of space for mounting sights and optics. While the handguard is slim, LMT installs a heat sink to prevent it from getting too hot during rapid-fire strings.

The long top rail has T-markings that make it easy to remove and reinstall optics without losing your zero. Rail sections can be added to the handguard's sides and bottom as needed.



The author's test SLK8 came with a 16-inch-long Ultra Match stainless steel barrel with a 1-in-7.5-inch twist rate. LMT also offers other barrel options.

of magazines in a short period of time. The SLK8 addresses this issue, however, by having a heat sink in the area where the two screws hold the barrel in place. After three or four magazines dumps, the handguard remains cool enough to hold.

The SLK8 is built specifically to be lightweight, maneuverable and durable enough to handle the rigors of a 3-Gun competition. A long, slick rifle chambered in 5.56mm NATO, the SLK8 I received for testing came with a 16-inch, Ultra Match stainless steel barrel with 1-in-7.5-inch-twist 5R rifling. LMT also offers the SLK8 with other barrel options. The upper receiver also features a tactical charging handle. Inside, you'll find a semi-auto bolt carrier group.

This rifle's upper is mated with an LMT Defender lower receiver with a SOPMOD buttstock, a two-stage match trigger and an Ergo grip designed exclusively for LMT. The safety and magazine release are both ambidextrous. The SLK8 ships with a sling, an operator's manual, one 30-round magazine, a calibrated torque wrench, four rail segments, six rubberized grip panels and two heavy-duty, push-button swivels.

SLICK SHOOTER

To run the SLK8 through its paces, I tested five different factory loads. My course of fire consisted of shooting five 5-shot groups at 100 yards. Throughout the day, temperatures ranged from the mid-60s to the high 70s, with gusts creating a 14-mph crosswind. To test the rifle's accuracy, I mounted a Trijicon 5-20x50mm AccuPoint scope.

After testing the accuracy for all of the loads, I switched to a Trijicon 4X ACOG and fired an additional 10 rounds with each load to measure their velocities. I fired an additional 150 rounds off-hand at steel targets at varying ranges. In all, I sent more than 350 rounds downrange during this evaluation without a single hiccup.

"In all, I sent more than 350 rounds downrange during this evaluation without a single hiccup."

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LMT SLK8

The first load I tested was Hornady's 55-grain TAP. The velocity averaged 2,820 fps, with an extreme spread of 75 fps. Five-shot groups averaged 1.34 inches, and the tightest was 0.58 inches. Hornady's 75-grain Match BTHP load averaged 1.26 inches for five groups, with the smallest group measuring 1.04 inches. The average velocity was 2,528 fps, and the extreme spread was 104 fps.

Federal's American Eagle 62-grain FMJ boat-tail load averaged 1.84 inches, with the tightest group measuring 1.68 inches. This load was one of the more consistent in regards to speed, with an extreme spread of 66 fps. Its average velocity was 2,880 fps. Next up was Federal's 69-grain Gold Medal Match load featuring Sierra MatchKing bullets, which averaged 2,730 fps and showed an extreme velocity spread of 56 fps. This load averaged 1.27 inches, with the smallest group measuring 1.19 inches.

Winchester's 62-grain FMJ load averaged 2,840 fps, with an extreme spread of 67 fps. This load produced groups averaging 3.42 inches, with the smallest group measuring 2.12 inches.

PERFORMANCE

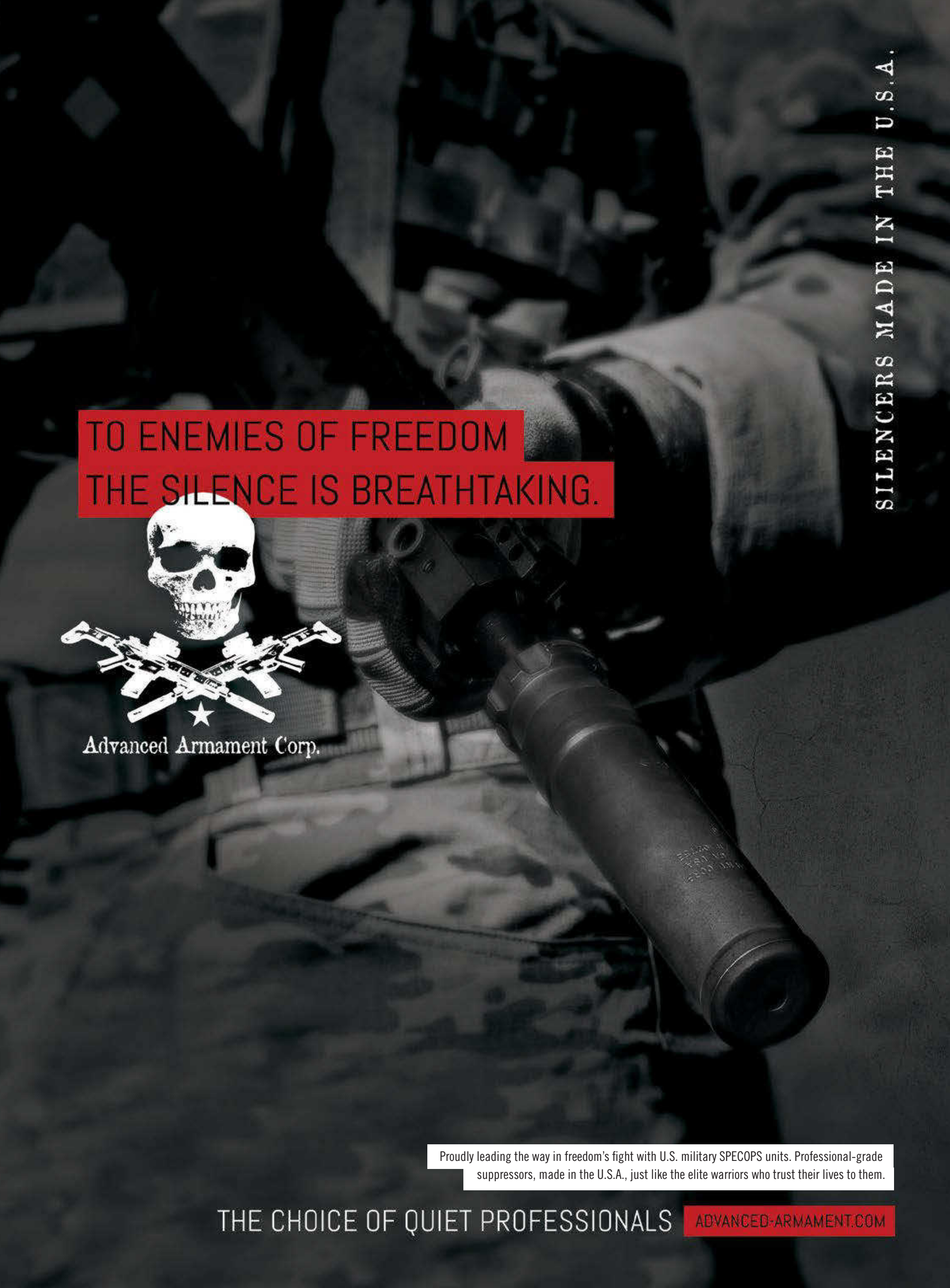
LEWIS MACHINE & TOOL SLK8

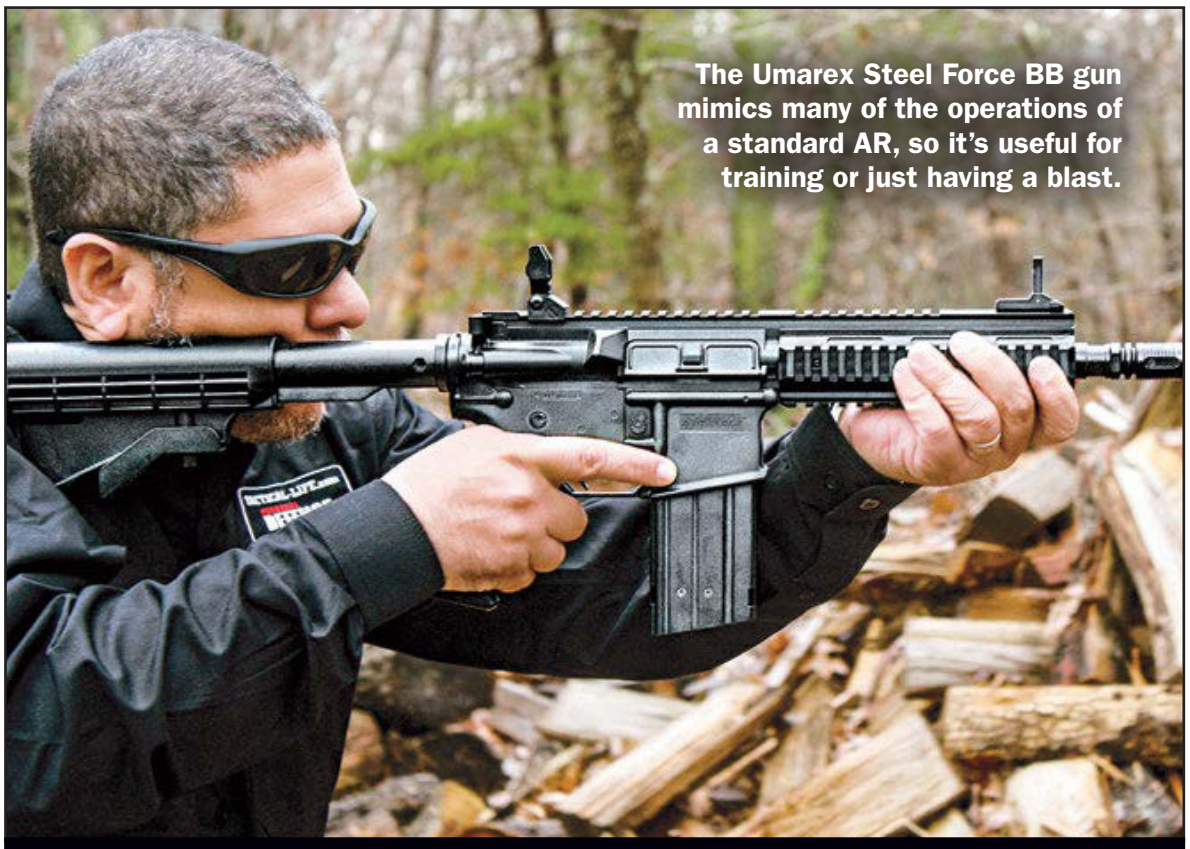
LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Federal 69 Gold Medal Match	2,730	1.19
Federal American Eagle 62 FMJ	2,880	1.68
Hornady 55 TAP	2,820	0.58
Hornady 75 Match BTHP	2,528	1.04
Winchester 62 FMJ	2,840	2.12

NOTE: Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

MATCH GRADE

LMT's rifles are easy to clean owing to their simple disassembly for maintenance. The quick-change barrel system also makes it easy for shooters to quickly swap between .204 Ruger, 5.56mm NATO, 300 BLK and 6.8 SPC chamberings. LMT rifles have developed a reputation for innovation and precision, and the SLK8 continues that tradition with a model that should prove successful in 3-Gun competitions. For more information, visit lmtdefense.com or call 309-787-7151.


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The Umarex Steel Force BB gun mimics many of the operations of a standard AR, so it's useful for training or just having a blast.

STEEL FORCE AR

Umarex's burst-fire, AR-style airgun maximizes your tactical training and plinking fun!

■ **BY** JORGE AMSELLE

Airguns have a great deal of utility and can be used in places where firearms cannot. This has a significant training advantage for the average shooter. For those who like to train with AR-platform rifles, Umarex USA has a new airgun that really fits the bill. The Umarex Steel Force is a clone of a typical short-barreled AR-platform rifle that operates with the use of two standard CO_2 cartridges and fires steel, .177-caliber BBs from a built-in 300-round reservoir.

But shooting a BB gun was always supposed to be about fun as much as utility, and the Umarex Steel Force doesn't lack in this regard, either. It has a semi-automatic capability, and with a short flick of the standard AR selector, it will fire six-round bursts as well. Unfortunately, users will have to make do with six-round bursts as true full-auto would release too much CO_2 and freeze up the works.

In semi-automatic mode, you get the most power for each shot, and the BBs exit the short 7.5-inch barrel at 430 fps. Firing in burst mode results in somewhat slower velocities. It should also be noted that firing quickly even in semi-automatic mode will result in slower velocities. One of the ironies of firing a CO_2 gun is that instead of heating up, it cools down, which affects operation, so for maximum accuracy and velocity it is best to slow down. You will also notice a quick drop off in velocity after about 300 shots, indicating the need for new CO_2 cartridges. In keeping with the rifle's style, the barrel is capped with a mock A2-style flash suppressor.

TRULY SIMILAR

One of the most interesting features to me was the similarity the Steel Force has to an actual AR. The flattop "upper receiver" has a continuous Picatinny top rail, offering approximately 8.5 inches of space for scopes and sights. Permanently affixed, non-adjustable, polymer folding backup sights are included as well. There are additional Picatinny rail sections on the right side and bottom of the handguard, with each offering 6 inches of space for mounting lights, lasers or a vertical foregrip as desired. There are no rails on the left side of the handguard, as this is where the magazine and charger are located. This is the only area that outwardly differs from an AR.

The removable magazine looks like a standard, if a bit long, 20-round AR magazine, but it instead houses the twin CO_2 cartridges and should not be routinely removed unless replacing the CO_2. It is partially removed using a standard AR magazine release on the right side of the rifle, but the user must also depress a metal tab on the magazine body to completely remove it. Once it is out of the rifle, the user can remove the cover plate to insert the CO_2 cartridges. An included key fits neatly inside the "magazine" and allows the cartridges to be properly seated, pierced and also removed.

The right side of the rifle features a non-functional dust cover and forward assist. On the left side of the receiver is a mock bolt release and a standard three-position AR safety selector with safe, semi-auto and burst modes. At the rear is a six-position-collapsible stock adjustable for transportation and length of pull. This makes the Steel Force ideal as a trainer for kids and smaller-statured shooters. On top there is a functional charging handle that retracts about 2 inches and is needed to bring the rifle into battery for the first shot. This also adds to the rifle's training realism.

To fill the BB reservoir, retract the front sight about 1 inch to access the opening. Be careful not to overfill the reservoir, and Umarex specifies that only high-quality steel BBs should be used. The rifle cannot be fully disassembled, and maintenance consists simply of a drop of lubricant at the top of each CO_2 cartridge when it is inserted. If a BB gets stuck in the barrel, possibly due to an undercharged CO_2 car-

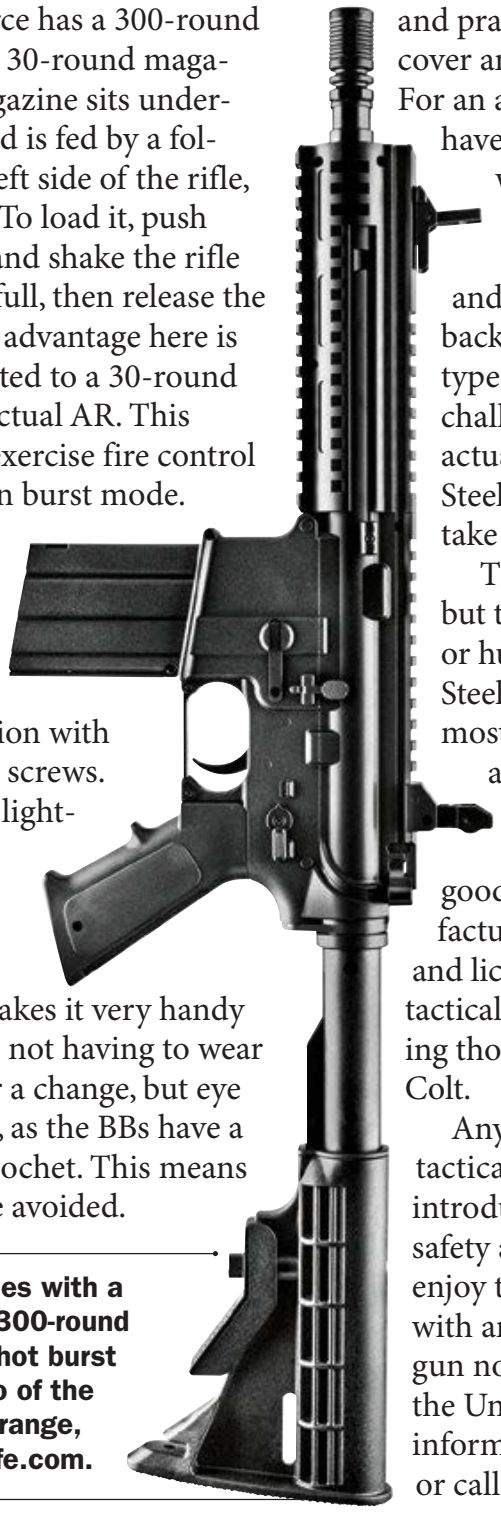
SPECIFICATIONS

UMAREX STEEL FORCE

CALIBER:	.177 (4.5mm)
BARREL:	7.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	24.4-28.2 inches
WEIGHT:	3.37 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	Flip-up front and rear
ACTION:	Select-fire
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	300
MSRP:	$141

tridge, it is necessary to remove the CO_2, place the rifle on safe and use a .17-caliber rod to clear the chamber.

While the Steel Force has a 300-round reservoir, it only has a 30-round magazine. This tubular magazine sits underneath the reservoir and is fed by a follower located on the left side of the rifle, along the handguard. To load it, push the follower forward and shake the rifle until the magazine is full, then release the follower. The training advantage here is that you are truly limited to a 30-round magazine like on an actual AR. This forces the shooter to exercise fire control discipline, especially in burst mode.



The Steel Force comes with a collapsible stock, a 300-round reservoir and a six-shot burst mode. To see a video of the gun in action at the range, check out tactical-life.com.

HANDS ON

Despite its name, I could not find much steel at all in the rifle's construction with the exception of a few screws. This makes for a very lightweight rifle at less than 3.5 pounds. Its very compact length, under 30 inches with the stock extended, makes it very handy on the range. It is nice not having to wear hearing protection for a change, but eye protection is required, as the BBs have a strong tendency to ricochet. This means hard targets should be avoided.

Setting up some soda cans on the rage proved to offer a high level of fun. Cans bounced around aggressively when hit with a burst of steel BB, most of which had enough force to pierce both sides of the cans. The six-round burst mode also allows the user to fire shorter bursts if desired, which makes it much easier to conserve ammunition.

The Steel Force's accuracy was good using the iron sights, but it shot a bit low at 30 feet. I mounted a Bushnell TRS-25 HiRise red-dot sight, which fit perfectly and features a 3-MOA dot. Its 11 brightness settings makes the dot visible in all lighting conditions and helped wring out the rifle's full accuracy potential.

The Steel Force makes it easy to set up a shooting course in a wooded area or backyard. I set up cans along a trail and practiced jogging along, using cover and engaging targets quickly. For an added challenge you can have a friend set up the targets, with some hidden behind cover, etc. Take care to be aware of your surroundings and make sure you have a safe backstop for the BBs. This is the type of training that can be very challenging to pull off with an actual AR, but with the Umarex Steel Force, tactical training can take place almost anywhere.

The trigger is rather mushy, but this is not a precision target or hunting gun. The high-quality Steel Force is constructed of mostly polymer with some metal alloy, but it feels very sturdy and well made. Umarex is a German company with a good deal of experience manufacturing high-powered air rifles and licensed versions of popular tactical rifles and handguns, including those from Heckler & Koch and Colt.

Anyone looking to expand their tactical training opportunities, introduce new shooters to basic safety and marksmanship, or just enjoy the feel of popping cans with an easy-to-get full-auto BB gun now has the perfect tool with the Umarex Steel Force. For more information, visit umarexusa.com or call 479-646-4210.

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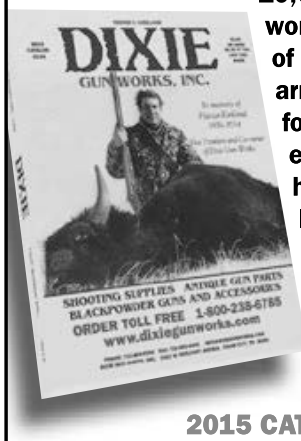
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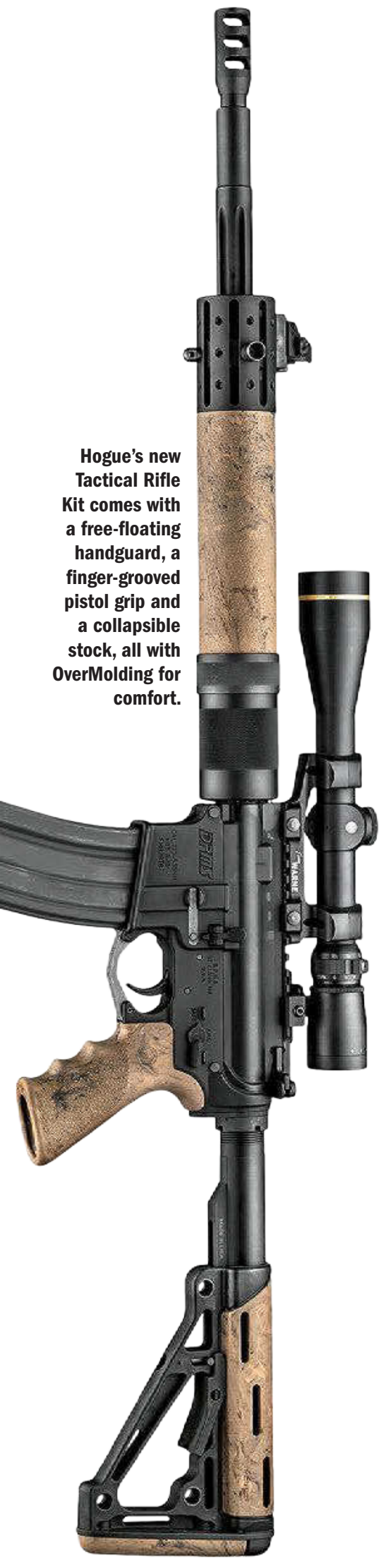
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Hogue's new Tactical Rifle Kit comes with a free-floating handguard, a finger-grooved pistol grip and a collapsible stock, all with OverMolding for comfort.

Hogue Kit & Caboodle

Dress your AR for success with Hogue's new all-in-one furniture kits.

BY JORGE AMSELLE

Replacing the stock set on your AR makes for an easy upgrade that also personalizes your firearm and adds a custom touch with additional features. You can certainly buy the parts you want piecemeal from separate manufacturers or from one manufacturer to maintain a unified appearance. Thanks to Hogue, however, you can get a complete furniture kit in one convenient package that also saves you money.

Hogue already has an excellent reputation for making a complete line of handgun grips and rifle stocks and accessories. Most of these feature the company's trademark ergonomic soft rubber OverMolding and Cobblestone texturing. The Hogue Tactical Rifle Kit is truly a complete package and an outstanding upgrade loaded with plenty of extras.

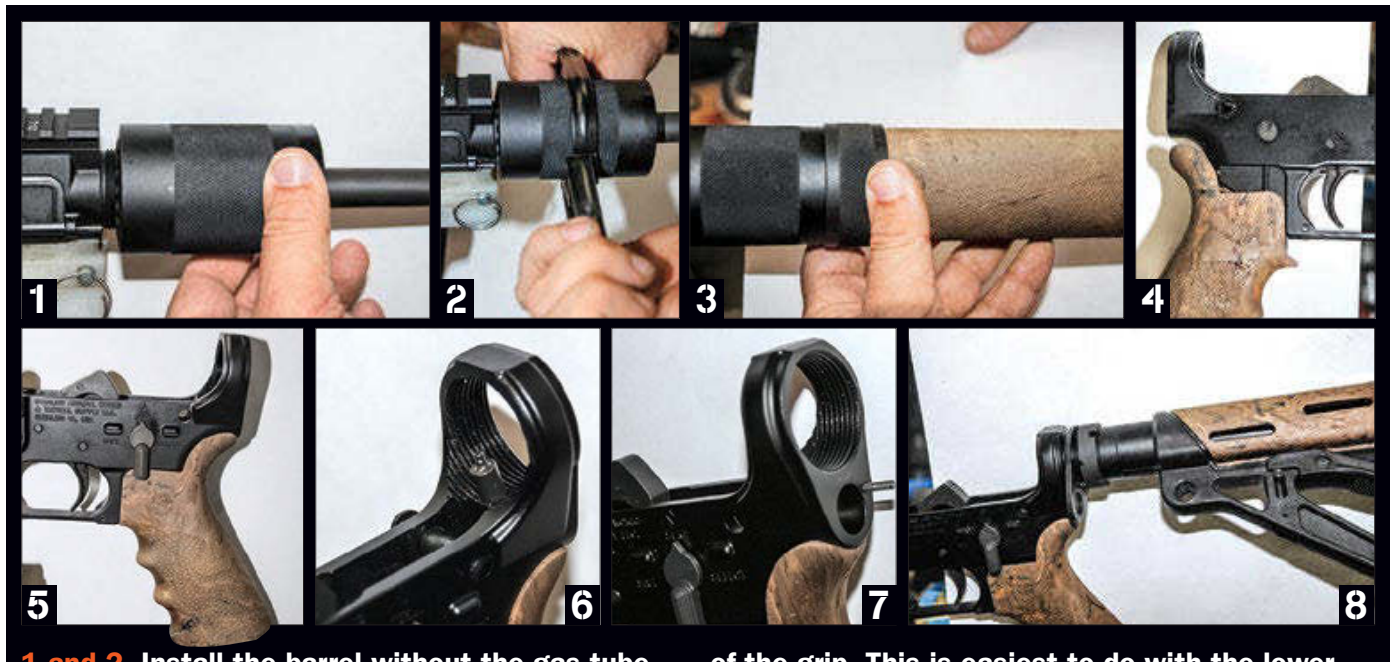
TOTAL PACKAGE

The collapsible buttstock includes the entire assembly, which is ideal for anyone looking to build their own AR. You get a mil-spec buffer tube, buffer and buffer spring as well as a castle nut and receiver endplate. The six-position-collapsible stock itself features rubber OverMolding on the cheekrest and buttplate and three ambidextrous QD sling attachment points as well as three sling webbing loops.

The round, aluminum handguard is rifle length but will easily fit on a carbine. It allows the barrel to remain free-floating, which helps improve accuracy. About half the length features the rubber OverMolding, and there are eight attachment points at the front for the included Picatinny rails. The aluminum rail is the right height for mounting a front sight if desired and you also get an offset rail and barricade stop. Installation is very easy with the included wrench, but you will need a low-profile gas block.

Lastly, the Hogue kit includes a fully rubber Over-Molded pistol grip with an ergonomic finger-grooved design and a high beavertail. The palm swells feature Hogue's distinct Cobblestone texture pattern, which adds extra traction.

The Hogue Tactical Rifle Kit is available in multiple colors, including black, OD green, Flat Dark Earth, Ghillie Green, Ghillie Earth, pink, purple and Red Lava. Buying these parts as a kit saves time and money (you save 10 percent over buying the components separately), and it is made in the U.S. For more, visit hogueinc.com or call 800-438-4747.



1 and 2. Install the barrel without the gas tube, and screw the barrel nut in completely, making sure to align the holes so that the gas tube can be installed. 3. Screw in the handguard and tighten it, making sure that the front sight accessory holes are properly aligned with the top of the receiver and rear sight. 4 and 5. Install the pistol grip, making sure to secure the safety detent and detent spring in the hole on the top of the grip. This is easiest to do with the lower receiver upside down. Tighten the grip screw to complete the installation. 6 and 7. Install the buffer spring and retainer as well as the takedown pin detent and spring at the rear of the receiver. 8. Screw in the buttstock assembly until it catches the buffer retainer. Ensuring that the takedown spring is secured by the receiver endplate, tighten down the castle nut.

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All-American RUGER AR-556

Get the best bang for your hard-earned bucks with Ruger's newest, ready-to-dress AR.

BY DR. MARTIN D. TOPPER

The Ruger AR-556 is an accurate and reliable AR that doesn't cost a fortune, even though it's constructed from the same lightweight, durable materials as more expensive rifles. The only significant difference between the AR-556 and high-end models is that Ruger leaves it up to the prospective owners to decide if they want to add hundreds of dollars of high-end modifications like handguards with rails, match-grade barrels and competition triggers. But just as it is, the AR-556 is more than adequate for competition, hunting and personal defense.



Ruger ships the durable AR-556 with an adjustable front sight, a Quick Deploy rear sight, a hammer-forged barrel, a collapsible stock and much more for only $749.

MORE THAN A BARGAIN

Even though the AR-556 is an entry-level gun, it still has some really nice features. For example, the rifle's carbine-length gas block has a bayonet mount and a QD socket for mounting slings and accessories. The top of the upper receiver has a Picatinny rail for mounting sights and optics.

This rifle also comes with adjustable iron sights that are the proper height for co-witnessing with a number of optics. The rear sight is Ruger's Rapid Deploy sight, which can be folded to clear the ocular lens housing of a telescopic sight.

In addition, the gun's handguard is made of glass-filled nylon for comfort and heat protection, and the polymer, six-position-collapsible, M4-style buttstock is installed on a mil-spec buffer tube. And don't forget the comfortable, ergonomic pistol grip that is designed for the best trigger reach and a triggerguard that's enlarged for use with gloves.

The bolt carrier and barrel also have upgrades that improve reliability and accuracy. The inside of the bolt carrier and the carrier key are chrome-plated for resistance to corrosion from hot gases, and the key screws are staked to ensure they won't come loose during heavy use. The 16.1-inch, medium-contour barrel is cold-hammer forged for accuracy and easy cleaning. It has a 1-in-8-inch twist rate to stabilize projectiles weighing between 35 and 77 grains. The barrel has M4 feed ramps for reliable feeding, and the chamber is sized for the 5.56mm NATO cartridge so that the AR-556 will handle both 5.56mm and .223 Remington ammunition. The muzzle also has 1/2x28 threading. The barrel comes with a Ruger flash suppressor, but the threading allows for the attachment of suppressors and other muzzle devices the owner may want to add.

The AR-556 looked well-made when I picked it up at the Florida Gun Exchange, and a close examination at the workbench indicated there were no scratches, tool marks, poorly conformed parts or sharp edges anywhere on the external or internal surfaces. The upper and lower fit together snugly, and the safety moved smoothly and stayed put when placed in the "safe" and "fire" positions. On the other hand, the rifle's action was a bit tight, and the two-stage trigger had a pull weight of 7 pounds, but neither affected the functioning of the rifle.

ELITE ADD-ONS

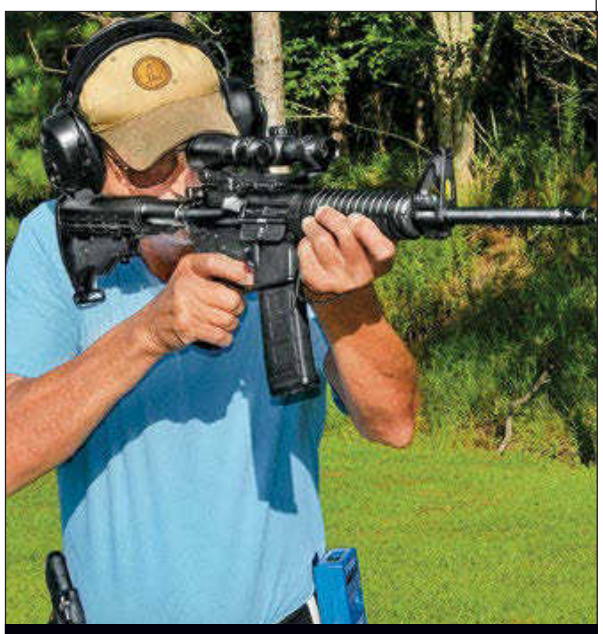
Aftermarket triggers for ARs are very popular, and Ruger just introduced one called the Elite 452. It costs a very reasonable $160, considering that triggers from manufacturers can go as high as $350. The Elite 452 is advertised as having a 4.5-pound pull, and it uses a lightweight hammer combined with a full-strength hammer spring to reduce the lock time without reducing the rifle's ability to reliably ignite a broad variety of primers. The trigger comes packaged with a safety switch and an ergonomic polymer pistol grip that has Ruger's optimized trigger reach. This trigger is not just for Ruger guns—it can be installed on just about any AR, and I was able to install the one Ruger sent me for this article in about 30 minutes. After installation, the trigger pull consistently measured 3.75 pounds. The pull was smooth and the sear broke very crisply. Given its reasonable price and good performance, the Elite 452 trigger is definitely worth considering.

For optics, I mounted a Leupold 1.5-4x20mm Mark AR MOD 1 scope on

Ruger's AR-556 is a well-made, accurate, lightweight and highly reliable 5.56mm that's easy on the family budget. It comes with traditional furniture and controls.



the rifle's top rail in a Leupold one-piece mount. The scope has a duplex reticle, and the crosshair's wide sections do a good job of framing the target at CQB distances when the scope is set at low power. The fine sections of the reticle allow accurate shot placement out to at least 300 meters when the scope is at 4X. This gives the shooter the flexibility to handle the vast majority of tasks that the AR-556 may be called on to perform. I also mounted an old Aimpoint CompM2 sight on the rifle to test for co-witnessing of the iron sights. When looking through the aperture of the rear sight, the Aimpoint's 4-MOA red dot appeared right on top of the front sight post.



At the range, the author found that the Ruger AR-556 was easy to shoot and performed well in timed tactical drills. It also ran flawlessly with several loads.

LIVE FIRE

I tested the AR-556 with a variety of .223 Remington loads and one 5.56mm NATO load. Ammunition included Federal's 62-grain American Eagle FMJs, Fort Scott's 55-grain solid-copper rounds, HPR's 62-grain Black Ops ammo, Liberty Ammo's 55-grain Sliverado fragmenting copper HPs and Winchester's 55-grain, polymer-tip Varmint-X ammo. In addition, I used Black Hills' 69-grain, .223 Remington Match load for a 300-meter accuracy test, Fiocchi's .223 Remington FMJs for timed five-shot drills at 7 and 15 yards, and Black Hills' 77-grain 5.56mm NATO ammo for timed three-shot drills at 15 yards. Some of these loads are fairly new and have advanced bullet designs. The Fort Scott load's pointed solid-copper bullet is designed to tumble and penetrate deeply. The HPR Black Ops hollow point has a compressed metal core that fragments and limits penetration. The Liberty Arms Silverado peels back as it penetrates and separates into a base disk that penetrates about 12 inches, and six or seven petals radiate outward from the main wound channel. Finally, the polymer tip on the Varmint X pushes rearward upon hitting the target and causes rapid expansion and core fragmentation. These specialized bullets allow a shooter to tailor the penetration of his or her ammunition to the size of game being hunted and the risk of collateral damage.

Accuracy tests were conducted at 100 yards, 200 yards and 300 meters. There were light to moderate gusting crosswinds on the day of the 100- and 200-yard tests. Bullets in .223 caliber generally have low ballistic coefficients and even a light crosswind can deflect them. Because of the wind, the 100-yard average groups were around 2 to 2.6 inches, with many individual groups showing lateral wind dispersion. Groups shot with the Winchester Varmint X load at 200 yards averaged 4.54 inches, again showing the effects of crosswind. Fortunately, there was very little wind on the day I shot a five-round group with Black Hills' 69-grain match load at 300 meters. This group measured 3.21 inches. This is more representative of what the rifle can do under good conditions.

As expected, bullet velocities from the AR-556's 16.1-inch barrel were about 200 to 300 fps lower than factory-published ballistics. The fastest load was Liberty Arms' 55-grain Silverado HPs, which crossed the Competition Electronics chronograph at 2,929 fps. The muzzle energy was 1,048 foot-pounds. The slowest load was the Fort Scott copper solid. At 2,652 fps, it produced 859 foot-pounds of muzzle energy, which is roughly equivalent to the energy of a .44 Magnum.

I ran timed five-shot drills twice at 7 and 15 yards. The drills involved engaging three targets from low ready with the first target getting a double tap to the chest, the second a single shot to the head and the third getting one to the chest and one to the head. String times were measured with a Competition Electronics timer. At 7 yards, the average time for two runs was 8.31 seconds and the score was 70 out of a possible 100 points. At 15 yards, the average time was 10.25 seconds and the score was 80/100. I ran a separate three-shot, 15-yard drill three times. It had two targets and required one chest shot and one headshot on the first target and the same on the next target. The average time was 5.25 seconds and the score was 65/90. The rifle ran flawlessly, and the Elite 452 trigger allowed for fast, controlled shots to high-value areas.

RIGHT-ON RUGER

The AR-556 is a good example of the kind of value that can be built into modern firearms by using space-age materials and modern computer-based design and manufacturing techniques. For $749, the AR-556 buyer gets a rifle that is well-built, accurate, durable and totally reliable with a broad variety of ammunition. It will accept a wide range of optics and can be used as a platform for building a custom rifle if the user is so inclined. In short, it's a very good rifle for a very good price. Visit ruger.com for more information.

SPECIFICATIONS
RUGER AR-556

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16.1 inches
OA LENGTH:	32.25-35.5 inches
WEIGHT:	6.5 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	Front post, adjustable rear
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$749

PERFORMANCE
RUGER AR-556

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Federal American Eagle 62 FMJ	2,777	2.15
Fort Scott 55	2,652	1.93
HPR 62 Black Ops	2,731	1.95
Liberty 55 Silverado	2,929	1.65
Winchester 55 Varmint X	2,839	1.33

NOTE: Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

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Meet the lightest .308 AR on the market...

R-25 GII

Big Green's New Hunting Machine!



BY DOUG LARSON



The R-25 GII's light weight, smart styling and distinctive camo finish make it perfect for hunting, and Remington offers it in a variety of field-ready calibers, including .308 Winchester (shown), .260 Remington, .243 Winchester and 7mm-08.

ONE OF THE MOST sought-after features of a rifle used for hunting is light weight. That's not to say that the accuracy, reliability, trigger and other attributes are not important, but if a gun has all of those other features yet weighs too much to comfortably tote around the field all day, it's likely to be left at home.

To address this problem, Remington borrowed the basic features of the GII from its sister company, DPMS, and used them to build the new R-25 GII modern sporting rifle that is chambered in either .308 Winchester, .260 Remington, .243 Winchester or 7mm-08. The gun weighs 7.62 pounds unloaded and is more than a pound lighter than the previous generation R-25. Remington says that it is the lightest AR-style gun chambered in .308 Winchester that is now available anywhere.

SAVING WEIGHT

To reduce weight, the gun is a bit smaller than the typical .308/7.62mm NATO AR. Remington and DPMS tossed out the old designs for the upper and lower receivers and came up with new ones. The receivers are still made of mil-spec aluminum forgings and have the same appearance as older versions, but because they are smaller, they weigh less.

Inside the flattop upper receiver, the forged steel bolt carrier has been reduced in size, which reduces weight. And to eliminate the possibility of the bolted-on gas key working loose, the company replaced it with one that is integral to the carrier, except for the pinned tubular extension, which engages the gas tube.

Also contributing to the reduction in weigh is the eight-sided, carbon-fiber handguard that allows the barrel to float freely, enhancing accuracy. It's vented to allow air circulation for cooling, and forward at the 3, 6 and 9 o'clock positions, it is drilled and tapped for attaching short rail sections for mounting accessories like sling swivels.

Out front at the muzzle, Remington has recessed the crown for protection against damage that could rob accuracy. The 20-inch, fluted, stainless steel barrel is coated with Teflon for protection against the elements, and is black to reduce glare. The gas block of this direct-impingement gun is positioned just in front of the handguard, but there is unfortunately no attachment point for a front iron sight.

The charging handle is fairly standard and unobtrusive as charging handles go, but it provides enough gripping surface to facilitate racking the bolt. Should a round fail to chamber, the GII version of the R-25 has a bolt forward assist on the right side behind the ejection port.



"Even though Remington developed this gun with the hunter in mind, it has features that will make it at home in many different roles..."

Since this is designed as a hunting gun and is likely to see the use of many different types of bullets, including soft-pointed ones, Remington installed a steel feed ramp to encourage all types of bullets to feed properly. Remington also says that this feature is key to the reduced size and weight of the rifle.

To enhance ejection, dual ejectors have been installed. The dual ejector system increases the likelihood of proper ejection, especially if one of the ejectors should fail due to fouling or a broken spring. The company has also chosen to use an elastomer extractor cushion, for lack of a better description, instead of a spring. When compressed, it applies pressure like a spring, causing the extractor to grip the case rim. The extractor is also made of a new, undisclosed material that Remington says is nearly impervious to breaking.



The rifle sports a fluted barrel, a low-profile gas block and a handguard drilled and tapped for adding rails.



The lower receiver features an integral triggerguard, black controls and a Hogue pistol grip. Remington ships the rifle with a four-round magazine.

SPECIFICATIONS

REMINGTON R-25 GII

CALIBER:	.308 Winchester
BARREL:	20 inches
OA LENGTH:	39 inches
WEIGHT:	7.62 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Polymer
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Mossy Oak Break-Up Infinity
CAPACITY:	4+1
MSRP:	$1,697

The triggerguard is fixed and is integral to the receiver instead of hinged, and the magazine well has a fairly pronounced bevel to encourage fast reloads. The magazine release and the bolt release are located where one would expect them to be on an AR. The gun comes equipped with a Hogue pistol grip that can be removed and replaced with a different aftermarket grip should the owner choose to do so.

The days of terrible factory triggers are passing, and Remington is participating in the trend. The gun I tested sported the standard two-stage match trigger and broke at just over 5.5 pounds. Remington also installs a skeletonized buttstock that contributes to the reduction in weight. At the rear is a SuperCell buttpad that does an effective job of reducing felt recoil.

Finally, Mossy Oak Break-Up Infinity camouflage covers the buttstock, receivers and handguard. Other parts like the recoil pad, grip, ejection port cover, magazine, gas block and barrel may or may not come with the camouflage finish.

A feature that is not readily apparent is the presence of three flutes beneath the barrel nut that Remington says are there to vent gases forward instead of back into the receiver should the gun suffer a case separation when firing. Another less-than-obvious feature of the R-25 GII is that, even though the gun is smaller and lighter than other .308 ARs, Remington says the gun has the same dimensions as a standard 5.56mm AR for gas-tube-to-bore and bore-to-rail distances. This makes more aftermarket handguards compatible with the gun. Additionally, the rail height above the bore is the same as a standard M4, making more optics and mounts compatible.

RANGE WORKOUTS

In December of 2014, I had the opportunity to get acquainted with some pre-production specimens of the R-25 GII when Remington unveiled them at Gunsite near Paulden, Arizona. Gunsite is the world's premier firearms training center and was founded by Colonel Jeff Cooper. The folks at Gunsite have been training everyone from regular law-abiding U.S. citizens to elite warriors for many years, and have an outstanding record of providing quality instruction.

While time was not allotted for a formal evaluation of the gun and accuracy tests were not conducted—these were pre-production guns anyway—myself and other writers sent many, many rounds downrange through several guns in heavy rain. Speaking for myself, the guns I fired suffered no malfunctions and I was able to readily hit my targets out to 200 yards very quickly. The gun proved to be fast handling and completely accurate for the hunting chore.

Guns were fired from different positions, including kneeling, sitting, prone and off of improvised rests. Remington had installed and zeroed several different optics on the test guns, and I heard only favorable comments from all the shooters despite the poor weather conditions and difficulty they added to the test shoot. One impression that stuck with me was that recoil was noticeably less with this .308 AR-style gun compared to many other .308-chambered ARs I have fired.

Some months later, I received a production R-25 GII for evaluation. While some of the features differed from the guns used at Gunsite, the gun functioned reliably and I had the same impression of reduced recoil. The test gun was furnished with one four-round magazine, but a Lancer L7 Advanced Warfighter magazine with a higher capacity also worked. Using a Burris Signature Series 3-10x40mm scope off a bench, the gun printed groups entirely acceptable for hunting—and much better than production hunting guns of 30 years ago.

Even though Remington developed this gun with the hunter in mind, it has features that will make it at home in many different roles, including simply shooting for fun. For more information, visit remington.com or call 800-243-9700.

PERFORMANCE

REMINGTON R-25 GII

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY	
		AVERAGE	BEST
Asym 175 SMK	2,576	1.79	1.55
Black Hills Gold 180 AccuBond	2,499	1.66	1.50
Eagle Eye 175 HPBT	2,671	1.38	1.08
Federal 150 Fusion	2,785	2.89	2.23

NOTE: Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in feet per second (fps) by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for five-shot groups at 100 yards.

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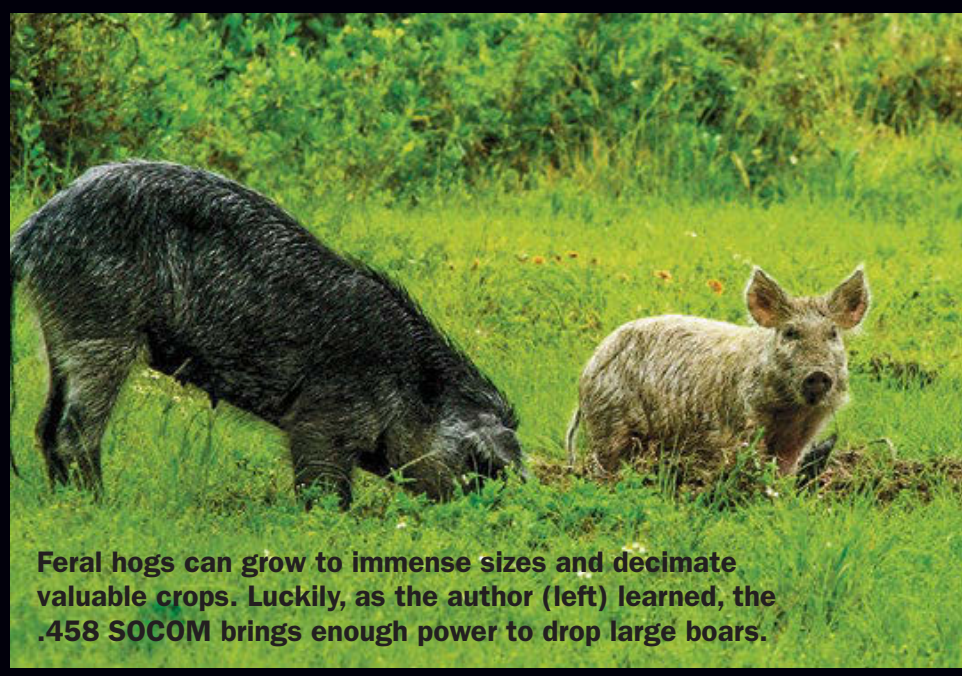
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Ryan Wilson draws a bead on a hog in heavy cover with a Wilson Combat Recon AR chambered in the powerhouse .458 SOCOM and fitted with a Whisper suppressor as well as a Trijicon 3-9x40mm AccuPoint scope. Shots are fast and close in this kind of hog hunting.





Feral hogs can grow to immense sizes and decimate valuable crops. Luckily, as the author (left) learned, the .458 SOCOM brings enough power to drop large boars.





U.S. Department of Agriculture Photo

GO HOG WILD

Wilson Combat Style!

Kick corn to the curb and don your stalking shoes for some super-stealthy, down-home action.

BY WAYNE VAN ZWOLL

There are many ways to shoot a pig. I've tried only a few. What seems obvious, though, is that pigs lack the versatility to keep any one tactic interesting. Driven hunts, as practiced in Europe, keep sportsmen engaged mainly because pigs thundering through the forest are challenging targets. You hit lots of trees. At the same time, pigs give you a chance; they move with no more vertical bounce than a heart monitor on a corpse. And pigs tagged at the gallop deliver a spectacular finish.

On the other hand, hunting pigs from a stand without a gaggle of Germans and Poles beating them to you is a thumb-twiddling test of patience. Dark skies get darker over a dark pile of corn. The pigs don't always come. In the Old Country, on snow, the only sure thing is that you'll get colder with the night. And because pigs often come after dark, and night hunting is legal, you're expected to remain in place as frostbite sets in.

Stateside, a few hunters add variety to pig hunting by chasing them with spears. For me, pistols are challenge enough. A 1911 in hand, I've crawled through snake cover on the heels of foraging porkers. As my effective range with a .45 ACP matches that of a medieval pikeman, spear-clutching hunters have nothing on me.

But what options do you have when you're a guest and the pig population has spiked, and your host is drafting barricades to stem the porcine invasion?

"You gotta shoot some hogs." Bill grins encouragingly, as if that's what you want to do anyway and he is merely giving the benediction. He hands you a GI ammo can full of .223 cartridges squirreled away before Joe Biden pronounced AR-15s unnecessary and adds, "There's more where that came from."

It's Texas. No doubt there's more.

WAITING OVER CORN

But you don't want to plug a pig over corn. It isn't that corn is un-American. When Nikita Khrushchev first visited our heartland, he didn't rave about its missile silos, bomber bases or ammunition factories. He stood in awe of our corn. Those of us old enough to recall his shoe-banging on conference tables knew that Crude Niki was hardly stupid. He, a product of peasant agriculture in a harsh land, astutely traced the throbbing pulse of America's military might to the fertile soil of its breadbasket. Landscapes crowded by corn, granaries bursting with corn, freight trains laboring under the weight of corn—these impressed the man who had said, "We will bury you." He knew then that they could not.

Pigs aren't much into history. They've no military-industrial complex to fuel with carbohydrates. But they're enthusiastic about corn. Corn remains the Achilles' heel for all of

"There are many ways to kill a pig—some harder than creeping through Southern woodlands. But afoot in cover, you'll find hogs have good noses, keen hearing and little tolerance for hunters."





LEFT: Hunter and writer David Draper shot this heavy boar from a blind with a WC AR on the same expedition. RIGHT: Wilson's 7.62x40 WT (center) is derived from the .223 Rem (right). As its size suggests, the .458 SOCOM load (left) creates sizable entry and exit wounds.

porkdom. Corn brings otherwise sagacious swine into rifle sights. Corn makes *hunting* pigs an exercise in *shooting* pigs. Now, where hog numbers have reached critical mass—where, if they could fly, pigs would darken the skies from horizon to horizon—shooting pig is just fine. "Thin 'em out." Is there desperation behind that drawl? Wilson hands me another ammo can.

I've done this drill. You place a stool where red ants haven't yet homesteaded, and you keep one eye on the corn while the other cruises a tattered novel scrounged from the pile of paperbacks in the bunkhouse. A red sun sinks behind the oaks. The corn castle 80 yards hence was freshened this afternoon, courtesy an F-150 dating back to the Cold War. The pigs heard it. They know. When the light gets too dim even for the salacious sections of your book, you check the safety on the AR and listen hard. Is that a squirrel rustling the oak leaves? An armadillo? The whitetail deer left half an hour ago, after nosing, then nibbling at the corn. There's plenty left.

Upscale hosts can make long preludes more tolerable with elevated stands. In my youth, such perches comprised a web of 2x4s in a tree crotch. These days, commercial freestanding boxes are roomier than the housing I rented in grad school. Equipped with silently moving windows and executive chairs, they're airport-lounge comfortable. Cans of industrial-strength insecticide arm you for battle against the ubiquitous wasp, a huge fan of Texas deer towers. Downrange, the pile of unshelled ears has given way to an automatic feeder that comes alive at preset intervals to scatter fresh corn. The rattle is a dinner bell for hogs.

Some states let you add bulbs to light up porkers accustomed to men leaving the woods at dusk for appointments with Johnnie Walker. The hour after sunset often brings action at the corn.

"You didn't shoot?" Bill Wilson had cultivated this woodland for *trophy* hogs. In fact, its fenced periphery included pens baited with corn. Hogs traipsing in to chow down would trip a steel grate that fell behind them. Bill could then open a door to his old men's club, or reset the gate and boot sows and piglets back into the surrounding forest. From my tower this evening, I had watched a pair of fine boars, probably pushing 200 pounds, jostling for the corn. They'd been at it an hour when, just after sunset, a third pig arrived. My rifle, a Wilson Combat AR in .458 SOCOM, was certainly up to the task. But I wasn't. That trio of tuskers was chomping corn under red lights when I slipped from the blind and padded through the timber to the road.

"I just didn't feel like it." No, I didn't really *say* that—I caught myself just in time. Nowhere outside of Austin does "feel" pop up in Texas dialogue.

"Nope," I replied.

"Should have," Bill shrugged, then looked off the way he might have if instead I'd botched a slow-fire string with one of his custom-built 1911s, or missed a plate from sandbags with the AR that had punched a sub-walnut group for me at 200 yards. "Pigs are to shoot." He added that I had hiked in mighty early. It was only 9:00 p.m.

STILL MOVIN'

We ate very well that night—those who'd killed pigs and he who hadn't. Bill and Joyce are charitable people. A flavorful elk roast that flaked from a fork, with hot pinto beans, mashed potatoes and cornbread, paved the pallet for blue-ribbon cobbler. I'd kill a pig for that cobbler. Shamelessly, I dished up twice.

"How about stillhunting?" No plan for an assassin, it would add a bit of sport to this adventure. Bill allowed that the litter was dry, and it'd be tough, but that I could try it midday, then sit on the corn. A diplomatic offer. Bill's son, Ryan, who now runs Wilson Combat at the

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Wild hogs are drawn to all sorts of cash crops, especially corn. The best medicine for dealing with this threat? Hunting in any form—stillhunting, sitting over a blind, etc.

There's cover aplenty for hogs, turkeys and whitetails on Bill and Joyce Wilson's Circle WC Ranch in Texas, which spans over 9,000 acres.

company's Arkansas shop, kindly agreed to play the guide.

We eased into the reserve on a trail, then cut through the oaks upwind, pressing our toes slowly into the brittle leaves. Brush limited visibility to slingshot range and less. You needn't look for sneaking pigs, because pigs haven't yet learned to sneak. But they hide well. "Early afternoon, they bed in thickets," said Ryan. "You have to look sharp, be ready to shoot." Though the rangy frames and long snouts of the animals taken by my comrades signaled a genetic link to Russian or European wild boars, Texas' own feral hogs have contributed heavily to this pool. "Expect all colors. Try to find an ear."

He'd just whispered that hint when a pair of pigs shot from a downed tree. Thick, tall boars, they galloped off a short distance, then paused. A small alley gave me a raking shot to the rearmost hog. But while Ryan stood safely to the side, my carbine's muzzle hung uncomfortably close to him. The .458 SOCOM delivers a snappy report, even with a suppressor.



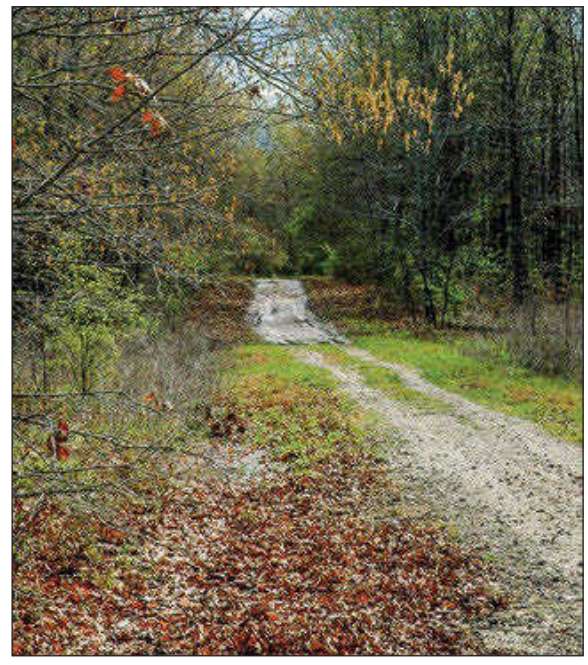
The author approaches the 210-pound boar he shot off-hand using a suppressed Wilson Combat AR during his stillhunt at Bill Wilson's Circle WC Ranch.

Besides, Bill had warned me against raking shots. "Hit a boar between the shoulders from the side with that 300-grain TTSX at 1,800 fps, and you put bacon on the ground," he said. "But quartering shots are chancy. Pigs don't bleed well without an exit hole, and even when fatally hit, they can go far enough to lose you. Be careful."

I let both pigs scurry off unmolested. The forest swallowed them immediately. I was surprised they made so little noise. "Tiny, pointy feet," grinned Ryan. "An occasional boar scales over 300 pounds, but you wouldn't know that, hearing them move."

We continued on, but within a few yards my pal suddenly halted, bending forward to peer through branches. I eased forward, followed his gaze and spied the ear even as he pointed. The bedded pig showed me little else, so I crept forward. Destination: a nodding sapling that might steady my rifle. I had not reached it when the boar spotted my movement and rose. I steadied the Aimpoint sight's red dot as best I could off-hand and pressed the trigger.

Slammed by the fat Barnes bullet, the porker showed no sign of a strike but sped off. I could have fired again, but swinging the stubby AR, I caught only snippets of pig



behind a heavy lattice of oak, redbud and alder. Just as the boar vanished, I saw its off shoulder sag. We ran after it. The pig lay dead just a few yards farther, the leaves around peppered by blood spray.

"Big boar!" exclaimed Ryan. "Well over 200 pounds." Having watched the scale needle spin under the weight of other carcasses on Wilson's ranch, I had come to appreciate the heft of these dense, stocky creatures. This one would later register 210 pounds.

CHALLENGES AFOOT

That evening I sat again over corn. Five whitetails, all bucks, arrived to sift it with their hooves. Though most of March had passed, one of the deer still carried an antler. No pigs came, sparing me a decision. The next morning, Bill suggested we get "a meat hog." Mature boars are, by universal acclaim, inedible. "But a young pig, say, up to 70 pounds, is tender and tasty. Great barbecue." And who was I to lecture a Texan—even a transplant from Arkansas—on barbecue?

Late in the afternoon, we hopped in a

Ranger to cruise the meadows, swamps and forests comprising the nearly 9,000 acres Bill has adopted as his retirement home. He's still "proving it up," with hunting towers and watering tanks, and automatic feeders with red lights "to get those shy old boys that let the young pigs at the corn first." He's rocked several roads for all-season access, and plans selective logging to keep the bottomlands attractive for hogs, deer and turkeys. New outbuildings include a handloading facility as comfortable as most cottages, and a lodge with a trophy room as big as a gymnasium. Ranks of plates on action-pistol ranges complement gongs and pop-ups on carbine courses, and a rifle range with steel out to 600 yards.

Lightning had awakened me before dawn this final day, followed by gentle drum rolls of rain on the roof. "We got nearly an inch," Bill said, herding the Ranger along a muddy track. Water glistened from hollows parched for months. The rain was most welcome.

We spied some pigs on the far side of a big burn, greening up with the season and promising more grass on the heels of the rain. In the distance, litters of piglets scampered after sauntering sows. We motored on. Another group crossed our path. When Bill spied a swarm of half-grown porkers, we took to our feet and galloped after them through thick woods. They slowed in even heavier cover. So did we, eventually closing stealthily on a young red boar. Briefly, his ribs came clear in a slot. I fired off-hand with a hastily planted shooting stick. My rifle this day was a Wilson AR in 7.62x40 WT with 1-in-12-inch rifling spinning 110-grain Barnes spitzers from the altered .223 hull. "That bullet was pretty much designed for the case," Bill said. "It's lethal." Then, as the hog had vanished: "Did you call a good shot?"

I had. We found the pig right away, double-lunged and dead. A firehose blast of blood coated the bushes and swamp grass for yards leading to the animal.

There are many ways to kill a pig—some harder than creeping through Southern woodlands. But afoot in cover, you'll find hogs have good noses, keen hearing and little tolerance for hunters. You'll have to look sharp, and sometimes shoot quickly. You won't fall asleep reading. For more on Wilson Combat, visit wilsoncombat.com or call 800-955-4856.

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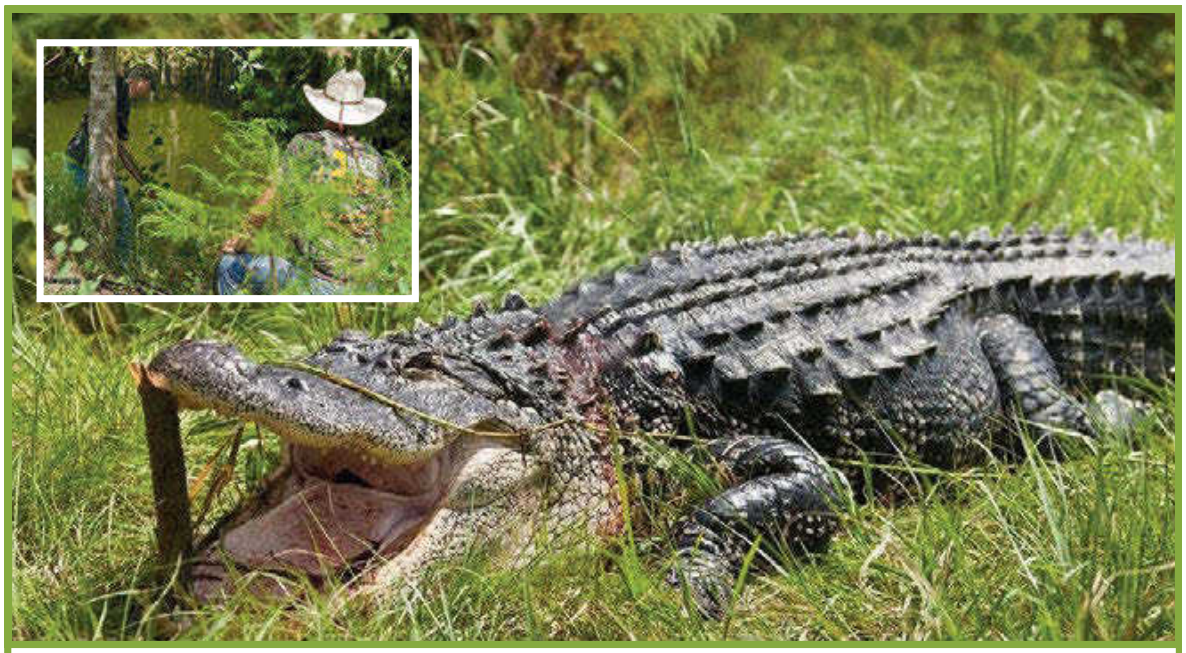


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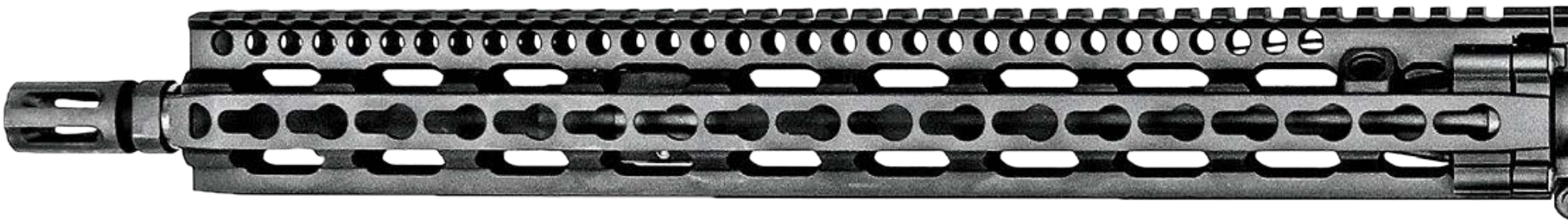
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STREAMLINED 5.56 STRIKER

Daniel Defense's M4V11LW delivers Tier One *quality and speed* in a lightweight package.

BY DR. MARTIN D. TOPPER

The DDM4V11LW acquitted itself well during testing at the range. Shooting from a rest with a Leupold VX-2 scope mounted, the author was able to get solid hits out to 300 yards.



Daniel Defense's M4V11LW is a versatile 5.56mm AR that combines rugged construction and fast handling with first-class accuracy. Shown equipped with a Leupold 2-7x33mm VX-2 scope.

The DDM4V11LW from Daniel Defense is an accurate and very reliable carbine that embodies Eugene Stoner's original concept for the AR-15. Stoner's idea was to produce a lightweight, small-caliber rifle with excellent firepower that was a lot easier to carry all day than an M14. Even though Stoner originally designed the AR for military purposes, carbine versions like the DDM4V11LW are a natural choice for hunters, competition shooters and civilians who use rifles for personal defense.

BUILT DD TOUGH

The DDM4V11LW's design reduces weight without compromising the ruggedness and durability that's so important in tactical rifles. The upper and lower receivers are milled from mil-spec 7075-T6 aluminum alloy that is then Type 3 hardcoat anodized for scratch and corrosion resistance.

The lightweight, 16-inch barrel is made of chrome-moly-vanadium steel that is hammer forged. It has a 1-in-7-inch twist rate, which allows the rifle to easily stabilize 77-grain bullets. The barrel also has a mil-spec heavy phosphate coating for weather resistance. At the end of the barrel is a Daniel Defense flash suppressor made of 17-4 PH stainless steel that is nitride coated to resist corrosion. The rifle's mid-length gas system is equipped with a pinned low-profile gas block made of hardened steel that has the same durable phosphate coating as the barrel.

To ensure that the DDM4V11LW's internal operating system is as rugged as the barrel and receivers, Daniel Defense has chromed lined the bolt carrier group for corrosion resistance and smooth operation. In addition, the bolt carrier key screws are firmly staked in place to prevent any looseness that could cause the key to shift and tie up the action.

The handguard, stock and rear receiver extension are just as durable as the DDM4V11LW's main components, and they provide maximum flexibility for conforming the rifle to the individual needs of its user. The lightweight handguard is the 15-inch version of Daniel Defense's SLiM rail. Made of Type 3 hardcoat anodized, CNC-machined 6061-T6 aluminum, it extends nearly to the muzzle and has KeyMod attachment points that offer superior resistance to recoil and allow for a precise return to zero when accessories such as lasers are re-mounted after they have been removed. The length of the rail makes it easy to mount a large variety of accessories and also allows the shooter to extend their support hand closer to the muzzle and increase the precision with which the gun can be transitioned between targets.

The Daniel Defense stock and pistol grip are made of polymer with Soft Touch overmolding. The overmolding offers a comfortable and secure cheekweld and hand grip. In addition, the rugged 7075-T6 aluminum rear receiver extension has six positions to precisely adjust the length of pull. The lower receiver also has an enhanced magazine well for quick reloads. Put all of this together and the result is a reliable multi-mission rifle that gives its user great flexibility to adapt it to his or her needs.

FIT & FINISH

A good design is important, but so is quality of manufacture. When it arrived at the Florida Gun Exchange, I checked the DDM4V11LW for overall quality of construction, including fit, finish and function. It looked very good. At home, I field-stripped the rifle at my workbench and thoroughly checked it inside and out. There were no scratches, tool marks, sharp edges or poorly conformed lines anywhere on the gun. The fit was excellent. There was no play between the upper and lower receivers or between the upper receiver and the handguard or the rear receiver extension. The muzzle brake was square with the barrel. As for its finish, the entire gun was matte black and there was no mismatch in color even though three different finishes were applied to various parts.



Daniel Defense's new buttstocks feature soft, ribbed buttpads that help absorb recoil and lock the rifle into your shoulder pocket.

SPECIFICATIONS

DANIEL DEFENSE M4V11LW

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32.25-35.88 inches
WEIGHT:	6.15 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$1,599

In addition, all of the controls operated positively. The magazine latched firmly in place and was ejected smartly when the release was pushed. The safety was solid and smooth in operation, and the stock adjusted cleanly and locked solidly in place. The bolt handle unlocked and locked positively, and the carrier group moved smoothly in and out of battery when the operating handle was cycled.

The DDM411LW's trigger measured 7.5 pounds on average, and it functioned positively. This might be a bit on the heavy side for precise shots, but the DDM4V11LW is primarily designed to be a tactical rifle, so one shouldn't expect a target trigger.

ZEROING IN

The DDM4V11LW does not come with sights, so I mounted a Leupold 2-7x33mm VX-2 scope with a duplex crosshair. Set at 2X, this scope has a wide enough field of view to be useful in close quarters. At 7X, it allows you to easily engage targets out to 300 meters. This scope does not have a lighted reticle, so I mounted a Crimson Trace Rail Master Pro light/laser on the top rail. I mounted the scope in extra-high Leupold rings so my view would not be blocked by the laser/light. The result was a clear picture of the target at night with the crosshairs brightly backlit. In addition, the laser's red dot could be clearly seen in the scope in low light, making the scope function much like a red-dot sight.

I zeroed the laser for 20 yards by centering its dot on the crosshairs at that distance. Since the laser and crosshair are not coaxial, one must practice compensating for holdover and windage when using the dot just as one would do if the gun had a laser and no scope.

FAST & FURIOUS

I tested the DDM4V11LW's accuracy and velocity with five factory loads, including Black Hills' 77-grain 5.56mm NATO, Black Hills' 69-grain .223 Remington, CorBon's 77-grain .223 Remington, HPR's 77-grain .223 Remington and



The adjustable buttstock and pistol grip feature textured Soft Touch overmolding for enhanced shooting comfort and control.

The SLiM handguard makes it easy to accessorize the rifle, while the enlarged triggerguard accommodates gloves.

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Winchester's "White Box" version of the 5.56mm NATO M193 55-grain FMJ load. There were no stoppages or misfires.

To test the carbine's accuracy, I fired three 5-shot groups at 100 yards with all of the loads. The Winchester 5.56mm NATO load produced a 3.27-inch, three-group average and the other four loads shot three-group averages between 1.63 and 1.99 inches. The best single group, produced with CorBon's 77-grain ammo, measured 1.04 inches. The CorBon load also had the best 100-yard, three-group average. Long-range accuracy testing involved firing two 5-shot groups at 200 yards and two similar groups at 300 meters. At 200 yards, I engaged silhouettes with the 77-grain Black Hills load and the groups measured 2.79 and 2.89 inches. At 300 meters, two groups using the Black Hills 69-grain load measured 4.44 and 5.01 inches. Given that testing days had light to moderate crosswinds, this is very good performance.

DEFENSE DRILLS

The true test of a defensive firearm is how it performs in tactical drills and simulations. Therefore, I used the rifle to

5 More Lightweight AR Contenders

1. Diamondback DB15B: Weighing 6.65 pounds, the Diamondback DB15B has a 16-inch, 4140 chrome-moly, free-floating barrel that is chambered for the 5.56mm NATO. It has an aluminum handguard that can be modified with rails and retails for $1,019. (diamondbackfirearms.com; 877-997-6774)

2. Rock River Arms LAR-15 Lightweight STD: Weighing 6 pounds, the LAR-15 Lightweight STD has a 16-inch, lightweight barrel chambered for the 5.56mm NATO as well as a carbon-fiber handguard. The MSRP is $1,325. (866-980-7625; rockriverarms.com)

3. Ruger AR-556: This 6.5-pound rifle has a 16.1-inch, hammer-forged barrel chambered for the 5.56mm NATO and comes with adjustable sights. Its MSRP is $749. (ruger.com)

4. Smith & Wesson M&P15 VTAC II: This rifle weighs 6.28 pounds. Its 16-inch barrel has 5R rifling and is chambered for the 5.56mm NATO. It also has a Geissele Super V trigger. Its MSRP is $1,949. (smith-wesson.com; 800-331-0852)

5. Wilson Combat Tactical Lightweight: This 6.69-pound rifle has a 16-inch barrel and comes in 5.56mm NATO, 6.8 SPC, 300 Blackout, 7.62x40 WT and .458 SOCOM. The base MSRP is $2,250. (wilsoncombat.com; 800-955-4856)



PERFORMANCE
DANIEL DEFENSE M4V11LW

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Black Hills 69 Match	2,503	1.05
Black Hills 77 Match	2,603	1.58
CorBon 77 Match	2,474	1.04
HPR 77 FMJ	2,536	1.24
Winchester 55 FMJ	3,064	2.26

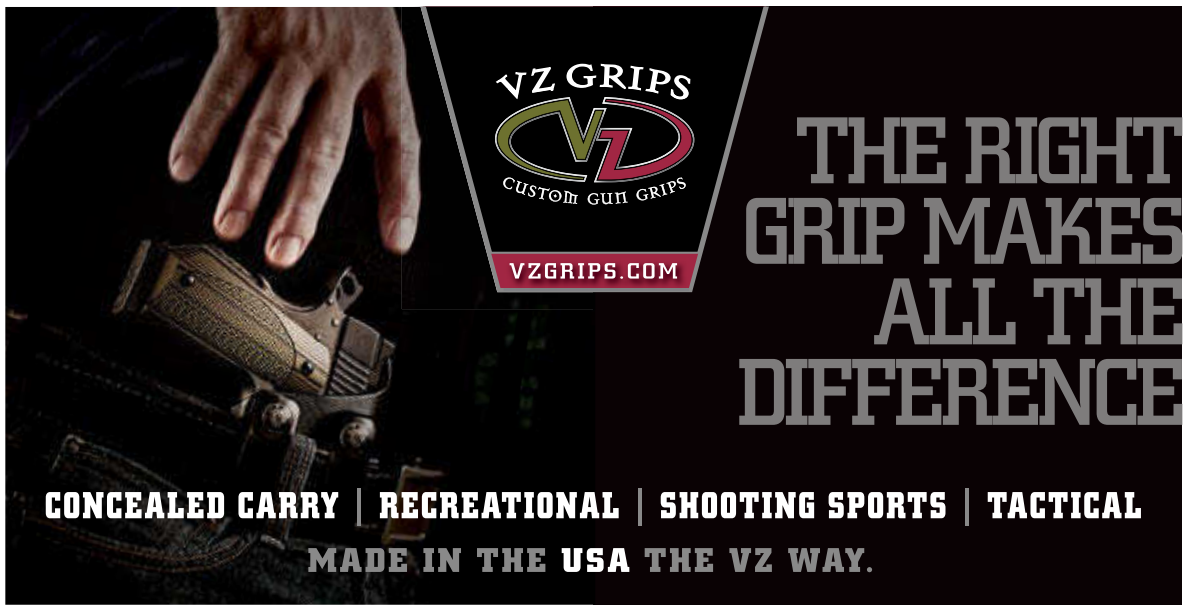
NOTE: Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

shoot two tactical drills and a home-invasion scenario. The tactical drills involved using setting the scope at 2X and shooting at multiple targets. The targets in the drills were at 7 and 15 yards. I used the Crimson Trace Rail Master Pro light/laser to engage multiple targets in the home-invasion scenario. I also used a Competition Electronics shot timer to record times for each string of fire. Each tactical drill was run twice and involved firing five shots at two targets that depicted three assailants. I shot the targets in this sequence: Assailant 1 got a double tap to the chest, Assailant 2 got a single headshot and Assailant 3 got one shot to the chest and one to the head. My average time for the two strings in the 7-yard drill was 10.4 seconds and the accuracy score was 70/100. The average time for two strings in the 15-yard drill was 9.25 seconds with an 80/100 score.

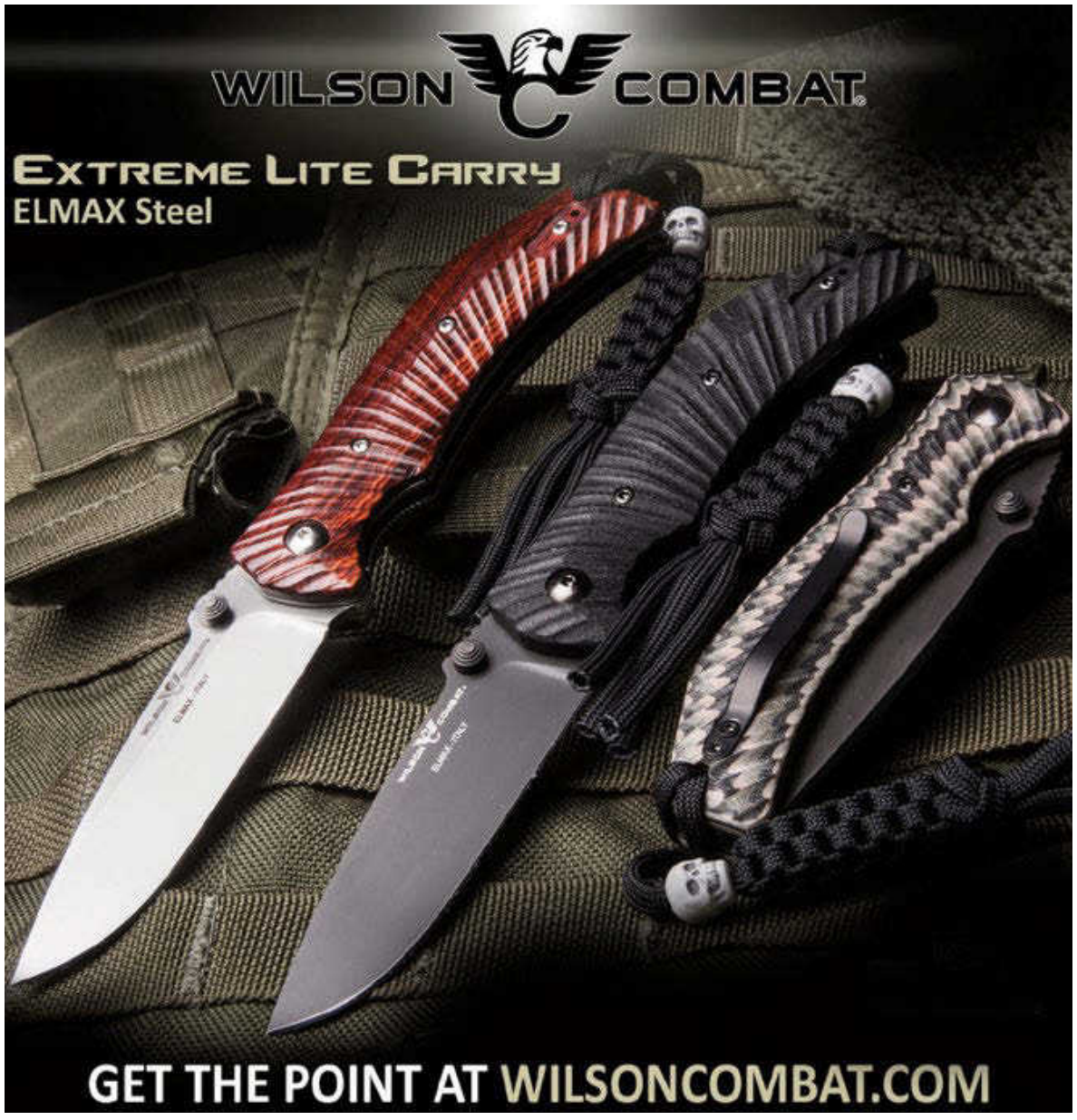
The scenario simulated a home invasion at night in which the homeowner comes out of the bedroom to confront several assailants trying to break into a child's room. At the buzzer, the shooter opens the bedroom door and engages the three assailants in a hallway. Targets were set at 6 and 9 yards. The average run time for the scenario was 10.1 seconds and the score was 80/100.

READY TO WIN

The DDM4V11LW is a lightweight, well-built, accurate and very reliable rifle. Its trigger was a bit heavy, but that did not interfere with shooting good groups with match ammunition. Its $1,599 MSRP is reasonable given its high level of quality, and it would be an excellent choice for personal defense, competition or hunting. For more information, call 866-554-4867 or visit danieldefense.com.







TIP OF THE SPEAR
LANCER L30s



Hit the mission-dedicated trifecta with the new MBR, LTR and Heavy Metal L30s!

BY DOUG LARSON

No testing the waters to see how shooters will accept just one new gun. Instead, Lancer Systems of Quakertown, Pennsylvania, recently introduced *three* new models of its L30 at the same time. Together, the three should satisfy the needs of many civilian shooters, law enforcement personnel and maybe even some specialized military units who desire something a bit different than the guns available through the usual supply channels.

PIERCING LANCERS

Lancer Systems has been around many years, supplying various items to the government for military and defense use, and the company has some pretty bright engineers and designers who make ARs with some unusual and useful features. Most noticeable is the company's interchangeable magazine well system. Lancer offers three magazine well sizes for its 5.56mm L15 rifles, including the Standard that is similar to those found on most ARs, a Tactical that has a much larger funnel, and a Competition version with a huge funnel. To swap out magazine wells, you just have to drift a pin out, slide the well off and replace it with one of a different size. The L30 rifles come with Tactical magazine wells, and Lancer also recently introduced versions with the left or right side removed, which allows for easy magazine changes when the gun is being used while prone or on a bench.

"Lancer Systems... has some pretty bright engineers and designers who make ARs with some unusual and useful features."

Another enhancement is the enlarged magazine release button, which is easier to find than a standard button, especially with gloved fingers. Additionally, Lancer lowers are equipped with ambidextrous bolt releases, allowing activation like other ARs or by pressing a button on the right side that is located just above the magazine release. Whether you're a righty or a lefty, you can release the bolt with your trigger finger.

Lancer's upper and lower receivers are matched, with the upper bearing the last three digits of the lower receiver's serial number. The receivers are finished with a black hardcoat anodizing, and the lower features a spring-loaded detent that exerts pressure against the upper when assembled to eliminate any accuracy-robbing play between the two halves.

Lancer has also figured out how to efficiently machine carbon-fiber



L30 MBR

Lancer's new L30 rifles are built to handle a number of missions with ease. The MBR is a general-purpose AR, the Heavy Metal is born to win competitions, and the LTR is the semi-auto sniper rifle of the bunch.



L30 LTR



L30 HEAVY METAL

handguards, which the company tells me is very difficult to do. All three of the new L30s feature these carbon-fiber handguards that have cooling slots and mounting points for accessories. The handguards are sturdy, lightweight and have smooth, octagonal contours.

The bolt carrier groups in Lancer's ARs are made by Rubber City Armory and feature a "black nitride plus" finish that is very hard and corrosion resistant. Carbon fouling just doesn't stick very well to these parts, making cleanup much easier compared to traditional manganese-phosphate-finished parts.

So, what are the differences between these three new L30s?

ELITE UPGRADES

The L30 MBR is built for the generalist who wants a robust carbine for hunting, self-defense or competition. The mid-weight, medium-contour, black-nitride-finished barrel is 16 inches long, has a 1-in-10-inch twist rate and is paired with a rifle-length gas system, which reduces bolt carrier speed a bit to reduce wear and tear on parts. Some shooters also believe this system makes recoil feel less harsh. Equipped with a trigger that is built to military specifications, this is not a precision rifle, but it is plenty accurate for its intended uses.

At the back end, the MBR has a B5 Systems Enhanced SOPMOD buttstock that provides two water-resistant storage compartments for batteries or small parts and provides a wide, comfortable comb for a good cheekweld. It also sports two quick-detach (QD) sling swivel sockets. On top of the upper receiver is a Picatinny rail for mounting sights or an optic, and at the front of the handguard is a short rail so that a front sight can be attached. For testing, I used GG&G flip-up iron sights and an EOTech XPS3 holographic weapon sight. Out front is the Lancer Nitrous Compensator, which is very effective at reducing recoil and muzzle rise and can be adjusted for the load of choice.

HEAVY METAL

For those shooters who are looking for a 3-Gun rifle, Lancer has created the L30 Heavy Metal. The most notable difference from the other two guns is the fixed-length Lancer Carbon Fiber stock, with its 13.88-inch length of pull, QD sling swivel sockets on both sides and a hard buttpad. But, like the MBR, it is equipped with a Lancer Nitrous Compensator that does an excellent job of helping the competitor get the gun back on target for fast follow-up shots.

To make the gun more accurate, it has a single-stage Geissele Super Dynamic 3-Gun (SD3G) trigger. The 18-inch,

SPECIFICATIONS

LANCER L30 HEAVY METAL

CALIBER:	.308 Winchester
BARREL:	18 inches
OA LENGTH:	39.75 inches
WEIGHT:	9.5 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Lancer Carbon Fiber
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black, stainless
CAPACITY:	10+1, 20+1
MSRP:	$3,345

SPECIFICATIONS

LANCER L30 LTR

CALIBER:	.308 Winchester
BARREL:	24 inches
OA LENGTH:	45-47.88 inches
WEIGHT:	12.5 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	KFS TACMOD
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black, stainless
CAPACITY:	10+1, 20+1
MSRP:	$4,200

SPECIFICATIONS

LANCER L30 MBR

CALIBER:	.308 Winchester
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	36.25-39.5 inches
WEIGHT:	9 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	B5 Systems SOPMOD Bravo
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	10+1, 20+1
MSRP:	$2,560

1-in-10-inch-twist, heavy barrel is made of stainless steel by White Oak Armament. For greater accuracy, the chamber is cut to Obermeyer specifications, which are slightly tighter than a standard or match .308 chamber. Because of this—and with any gun as a matter of fact—you should test any ammunition you plan on using in the gun before putting it into service. The Heavy Metal is fitted with a Raptor ambidextrous charging handle, an Ergo pistol grip and an adjustable gas block. The rail on top of the upper receiver extends just beyond the back of the Lancer Carbon Fiber Handguard and provides plenty of room for an optic or rear sight, while up front there is a short rail for the addition of a front sight.

LONG-RANGE TACTICAL RIFLE

Long-range competitions are drawing a lot of shooters, and Lancer developed the L30 LTR just for them. This is quite a gun, and it was the most accurate of the three guns I tested. Everything about it is set up for precision at long range.

The Geissele Hi-Speed National Match Designated Marksman Rifle trigger has two stages and is adjustable for sear engagement, pull weight and overtravel. It is a very nice trigger. The Lancer Carbon Fiber Handguard on the LTR is the longest of the three at 17.38 inches to accommodate the stainless steel, 24-inch, 1-in-11.25-inch-twist Bartlein barrel and its match-grade chamber. The barrel is lapped, and because of this, fouling was minimal during testing and easily removed. Up on top, a 25-inch-long Picatinny rail extends from the rear of the receiver to the front of the handguard. It has a 20-MOA cant built in so that the maximum range can be realized from whatever scope the shooter might choose. For testing, I used a Burris 5-25x50mm XTR II scope on a GG&G Scout rail.

PERFORMANCE

LANCER L30 HEAVY METAL

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY	
		AVERAGE	BEST
Black Hills 168 Match BTHP	2,626	1.95	1.52
Eagle Eye 175 Match HPBT	2,603	1.53	0.95
Lapua 185 Match Scenar OTM	2,497	1.17	0.34

LANCER L30 LTR

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY	
		AVERAGE	BEST
Black Hills 168 Match BTHP	2,651	1.11	0.94
Eagle Eye 175 Match HPBT	2,619	0.99	0.80
Lapua 185 Match Scenar OTM	2,503	0.72	0.23

LANCER L30 MBR

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY	
		AVERAGE	BEST
Black Hills 168 Match BTHP	2,611	1.01	0.90
Eagle Eye 175 Match HPBT	2,591	1.32	1.26
Lapua 185 Match Scenar OTM	2,484	1.58	1.33

NOTE: Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for three 5-shot groups at 100 yards.

A Lancer Viper brake is attached to the muzzle, and it proved to be exceptionally effective at reducing recoil and muzzle rise. Both it and the gun's gas block can be tuned for optimal performance with the shooter's selected ammunition. At the rear is a KFS TACMOD buttstock that is adjustable for length of pull, LimbSaver buttpad cant and comb height. And, like the Heavy Metal, the gun has a Raptor ambidextrous charging handle. The company told me that most LTRs are turning in groups of about 0.38 inches at 100 yards, but I was able to get a group out of the test gun of 0.23 inches. Not bad at all for a stock rifle used right out of the box.

PUNCHING THROUGH

I was lucky enough to test all three L30 variants recently, and they all ran reliably and produced tight groups, with the LTR, as mentioned, being the most accurate of the bunch. In fact, the results reflected the intended uses for each of these rifles, with the L30 MBR's best group, produced with Black Hills' 168-grain Match BTHPs, measuring 0.9 inches at 100 yards. The competition-ready L30 Heavy Metal produced a 0.34-inch group with Lapua's 185-grain Match Scenar OTM ammo. In short, these are high-end rifles designed for specific missions. If you're in the market for a super-accurate, next-gen AR with plenty of shooter-friendly enhancements, make sure you check out Lancer Systems. For more information, call 610-973-2600 or visit lancer-systems.com.

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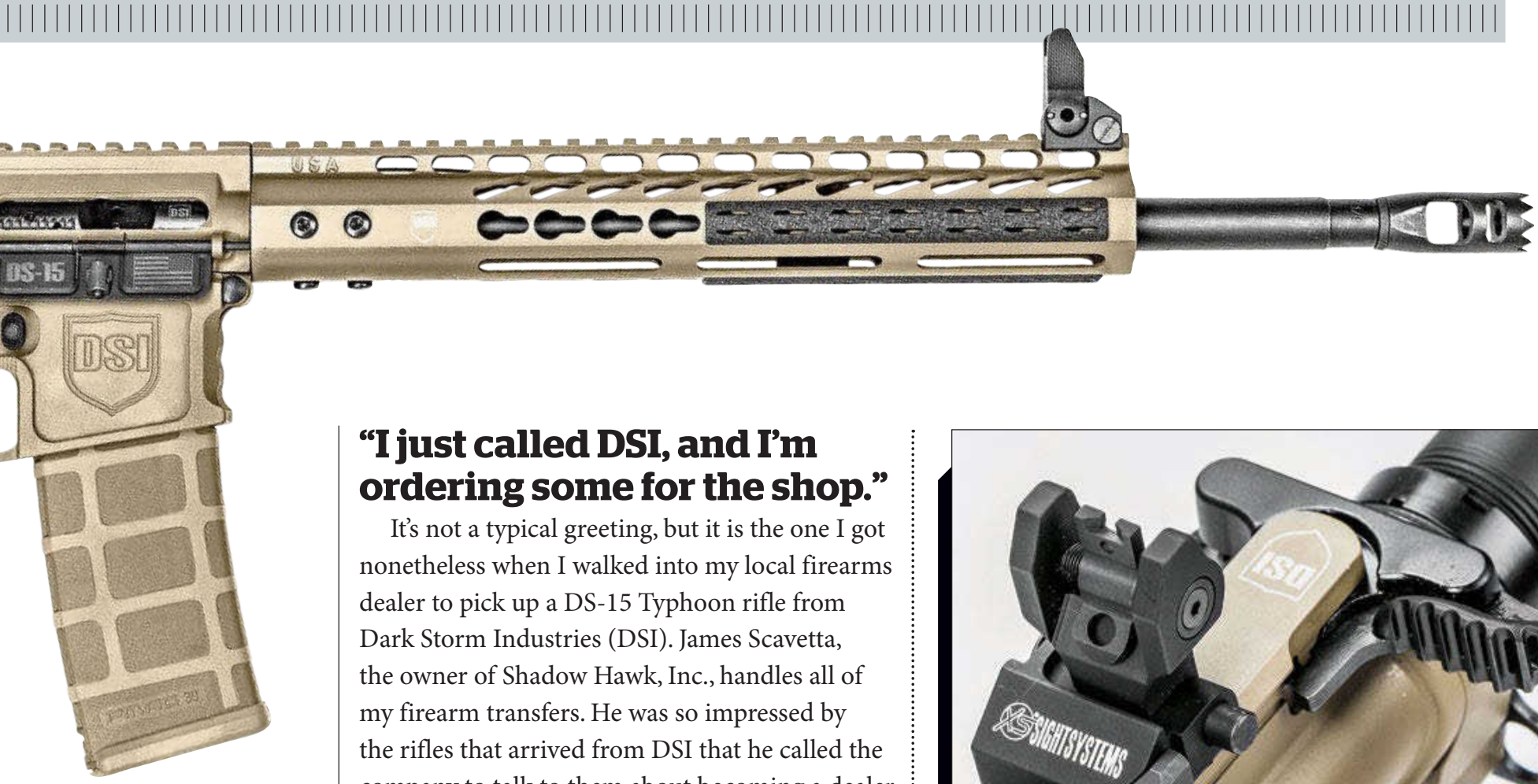
The DS-15 Typhoon comes equipped with a Magpul CTR stock, a Hogue grip and a KeyMod handguard—all finished in Flat Dark Earth.

DARK STORM-15

TYPHOON BREWING

Simply add an optic to Dark Storm's new FDE-finished 5.56 and start rocking like a hurricane!

BY RICHARD JOHNSON



The DS-15 is ready to go right out of the box. The author just added a set of folding Troy BattleSights and a Rail Panel Kit from Bravo Company Manufacturing for the range outing, where the DS-15 shined.

"I just called DSI, and I'm ordering some for the shop."

It's not a typical greeting, but it is the one I got nonetheless when I walked into my local firearms dealer to pick up a DS-15 Typhoon rifle from Dark Storm Industries (DSI). James Scavetta, the owner of Shadow Hawk, Inc., handles all of my firearm transfers. He was so impressed by the rifles that arrived from DSI that he called the company to talk to them about becoming a dealer before he even called me to let me know the AR-platform rifle had arrived.

I could see what Scavetta liked about the rifle. The gun had an attractive Flat Dark Earth finish and was tricked out with a number of popular upgrades from the stock to the muzzle device. Picking it up, the gun was very balanced, and a cursory inspection showed the workmanship to be excellent. In a market saturated with AR-style rifles, it is tough for companies to stand out. Yet, out of all of the rifles coming through his doors, Scavetta was impressed by the DS-15. I looked forward to spending time with it on the range.



EYES ON THE STORM

The DS-15 Typhoon is a direct-impingement, AR-style rifle chambered in 5.56mm NATO. This chambering allows you to also safely shoot .223 Remington ammunition in this rifle. The rifle has a 16-inch barrel with a 1-in-9-inch twist rate that should be suitable for most light- and medium-weight bullets. The DS-15 Typhoon also uses a carbine-length gas system with a low-profile block. A muzzle device that is tipped with ten pointed teeth caps the barrel. The teeth are quite sharp and could be used for breaking glass. In addition to the aggressive look, the device is designed to reduce the recoil and flash signature when shooting.

The DS-15 Typhoon's black controls contrast nicely with its Flat Dark Earth receivers. The charging handle features an enlarged tactical latch for easy bolt manipulations.

My test DS-15 Typhoon arrived with an upgraded 4-pound trigger. It has a thin profile and a smooth face that felt good to my finger. I felt no take-up in the pull or any overtravel. The reset was short and quick. A check on my trigger pull gauge showed the pull weight as being 4.31 pounds. According to DSI, the trigger upgrade is a $100 option at the time of purchase.

For comparison, I had a chance to test another DSI rifle with the company's standard trigger (see the DS-9 sidebar). The standard trigger is wider than the upgrade and felt like it had a slightly heavier pull. However, it also had no take-up or overtravel. Using the trigger pull gauge, I measured the standard trigger at 5.63 pounds. While I preferred the upgrade, the standard trigger is also very good, and many people should be quite happy with it.

"the DS-15...is a well-built rifle that performs well on the range. That alone makes it worth consideration. When you add in the Flat Dark Earth finish and quality furniture, the gun becomes even more appealing."

Instead of a standard handguard, DSI uses its own Ultralight Narrow-Profile KeyMod 12-inch Forearm. This handguard is made of 6061-T6 aluminum and is free floating. In the 12 o'clock position, the handguard has a full-length Picatinny rail. In the 3, 6 and 9 o'clock positions, the handguard has KeyMod attachment points for accessories.

If you are not already familiar with KeyMod systems, the handguard uses a series of keyholes that accessories connect into. The primary advantage over traditional Picatinny rails is the reduced handguard weight. The KeyMod system also allows the handguard to be much thinner than a typical quad-rail setup. If you have an accessory that can only attach to a Picatinny rail, precise-length rails can be attached to the KeyMod handguard so there is only the necessary amount of rail. By using the KeyMod handguard, DSI was able to keep the weight of this rifle below 6.5 pounds.

One of my favorite KeyMod accessories is the Rail Panel Kit from Bravo Company Manufacturing (BCM). These kits have low-profile panels with aggressive texturing that snap into KeyMod slots to provide an excellent gripping surface. The rail panels can be trimmed and easily fit around other accessories like lights and vertical grips. The Rail Panel Kits come in various colors to blend with your rifle's finish.

Attached to the rear of the rifle is the popular Magpul CTR stock. This stock is adjustable for length of pull and has a locking feature to reduce wiggle in the system once you find the correct length. The stock also has a QD attachment point for a sling. On this rifle, DSI uses a receiver endplate with a pair of oval attachment points for a sling. If you are running a single-point sling, this is a quick way to attach it to either side of the rifle and saves you the hassle of removing the buffer assembly to install one yourself.

Additional features of the DS-15 Typhoon include an ambidextrous safety selector, an enlarged charging handle latch and a Hogue pistol grip. The large charging handle latch makes it much easier to run the gun while wearing gloves, and the Hogue grip is soft and fills my hand much better than a standard AR-15/M4-style grip. DSI ships the rifle with one 30-round Magpul PMAG.

MAKING IT RAIN

Without a doubt, the DS-15 Typhoon in Flat Dark Earth looks good, and it is certainly outfitted with many great features. But the most important question: Does it run? Happily, I can say yes.

The DS-15 Typhoon ships without sights. For this review, I added a set of

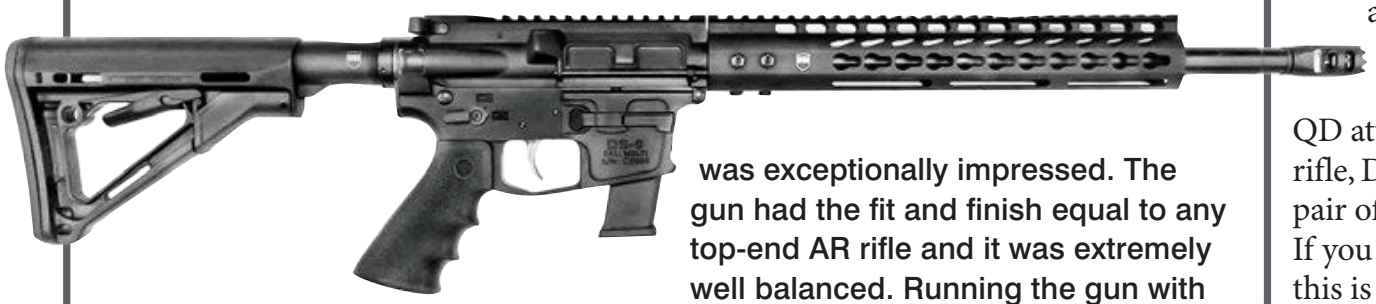
SPECIFICATIONS

DSI DS-15 TYPHOON

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	34.13-37.5 inches
WEIGHT:	6.38 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Magpul CTR
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Flat Dark Earth
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	$1,095 (black); $1,195 (FDE)

SNEAK PEEK:

A 9mm Storm Is Coming!



Pistol-caliber carbines offer a lot of advantages for home-defense situations. The recoil and muzzle blast are significantly less than with a 5.56mm rifle, yet the carbine offers a longer sight radius and more bullet velocity than a pistol. Only a few existing pistol-caliber carbines will take a handgun magazine, and that's one reason the new DS-9 stands out. Chambered in 9mm, the new DS-9 uses a lower receiver designed to take Glock magazines.

I had a chance to put a prototype gun through its paces and was exceptionally impressed. The gun had the fit and finish equal to any top-end AR rifle and it was extremely well balanced. Running the gun with factory Glock magazines, the reliability was perfect with 16 different loads, the recoil was extremely light, and follow-up shots were very fast and accurate.

The new DS-9 guns will be available in a variety of configurations, including the Typhoon model shown. This rifle will ship with a 17-round Glock mag, an ambidextrous sling plate, a Magpul CTR stock, a Hogue grip and a KeyMod handguard. Look for a full review in sister publication *Tactical Weapons* magazine.

SPECS

CALIBER:	9mm
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	34-36 inches
WEIGHT:	6.4 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Magpul CTR
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Blowback, semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	17+1
MSRP:	$1,195

Troy Folding BattleSights with the XS Sight Systems 24/7 Tritium Stripe front post and the CSAT rear aperture. A self-illuminating post helps me find the front sight in low-light conditions.

The CSAT rear aperture uses both a small peep and a pistol-type notch on the same plane. This allows me to zero the rifle at 100 yards with the small aperture and transition to the notch for 7-yard shots without any offset. At 100 yards with a front rest, I shot sub-4-inch groups with most ammunition using the iron sights. With a good scope, I would expect to halve those group sizes.

The gun ran without any malfunctions regardless of the ammunition used. The gun ships with a Magpul magazine,

PERFORMANCE
DSI DS-15 TYPHOON

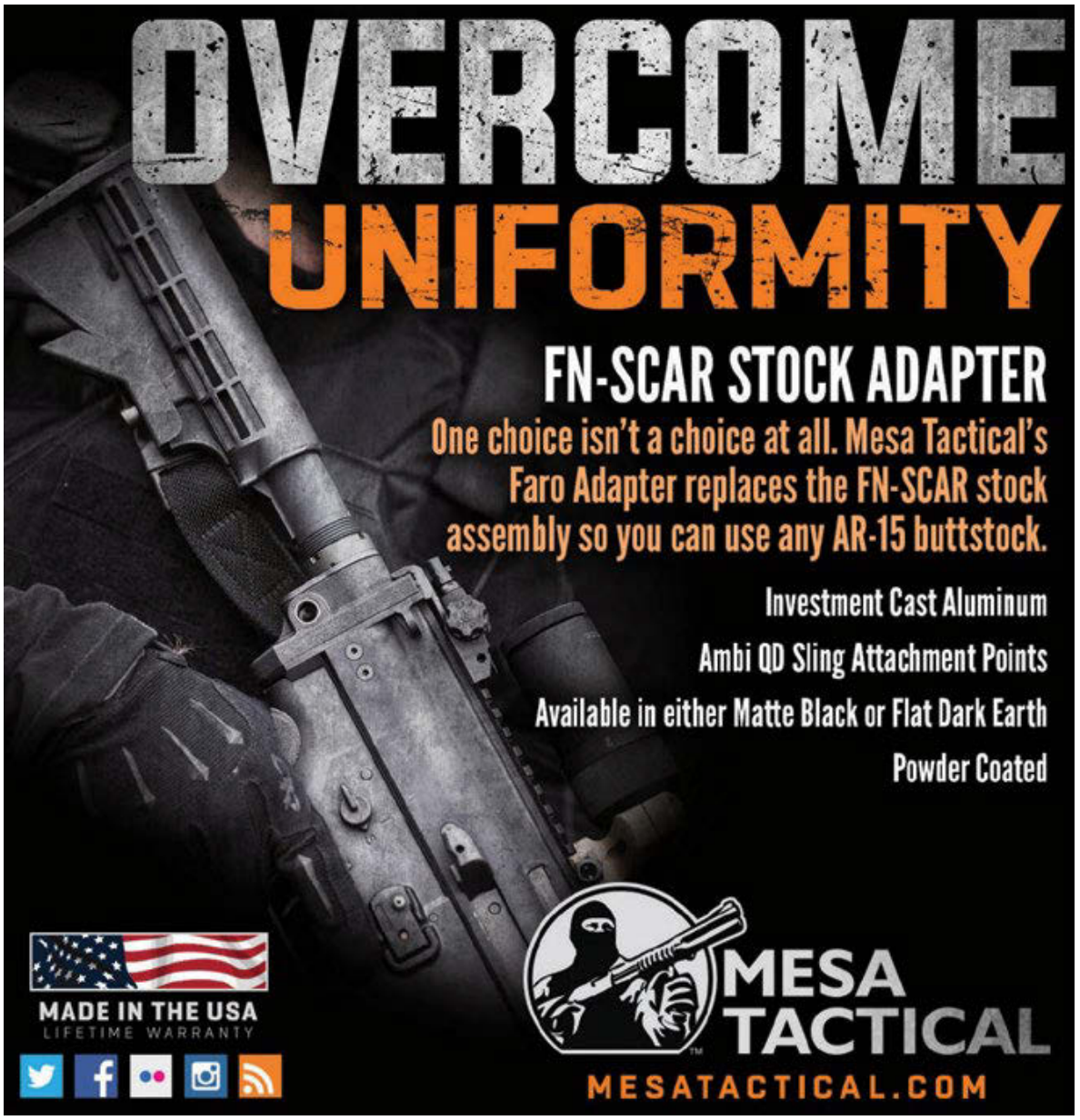
LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Hornady 55 GMX	2,901	3.25
HPR 60 V-MAX	2,503	3.13
Remington 55 MC	2,812	4.25

NOTE: Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

but I tried it with a variety of magazines from Troy, Brownells and ASC without any feeding issues. Magazines inserted and dropped free without a hitch. This may seem like a superfluous concern, but an improperly applied finish can add enough thickness to the inside of a magazine well to hinder proper magazine exchanges. Fortunately, the DS-15 Typhoon did not exhibit any problems.

The recoil was typical for an AR-platform rifle. That is to say it was light and easily managed. New shooters and those who are recoil sensitive will not have any problems handling this quality AR-platform rifle. At the range, follow-up shots were easy, and with the CSAT rear sight, transitioning from distant to close-in targets was very quick.

I like the DS-15. It is a well-built rifle that performs well on the range. That alone makes it worth consideration. When you add in the Flat Dark Earth finish and quality furniture, the gun becomes even more appealing. For more information, visit dark-storm.com or call 800-963-7700.





RAILS AND GRIPS

No two operators are the same, and the ability to customize the AR platform's grips and rails means the weapon can be personalized for each user. A good-fitting pistol grip means more shooting comfort and better weapon manipulation when you bring the gun into your workspace. Rails are the foundation you need to attach accessories like aiming lasers, white lights and vertical grips. Build your AR to your specs to suit your needs. ***—ARCR Staff Report***

AMERICAN BUILT ARMS COMPANY SBR P*GRIP

The SBR P*Grip (Pistol Grip) is lightweight and has a small, ergonomic profile that works well with shooters with small hands. Made from high-heat-rated nylon with high-strength fibers, the SBR P*Grip is strong and features a weather-resistant, internal storage compartment that will fit two AA batteries or one CR123 battery. (abarms.com)

BLACKHAWK QUAD-RAILS

The old saying "thin is in" applies to the pair of quad-rail handguards offered by BlackHawk. These two-piece aluminum handguards have Picatinny rails at the 3, 6, 9 and 12 o'clock positions and come in both rifle and carbine lengths. Quick-detach (QD) sling attachment points are located on both the right and left sides of these handguards. No modifications to the rifle are needed to securely install them. (blackhawk.com; 800-379-1732)

BLACKHEART AR SLING HOOK MOUNT PISTOL GRIP

Based on the ANG variation of the original SE1 grip, the Blackheart AR Sling Hook Mount Pistol Grip works with the AR's existing triggerguard. Strategic contours on the upper backstrap, finger shelf and lower portion of the grip ensure solid, positive hand placement, improved weapon retention and reduced fatigue during long range sessions. An internal storage compartment can hold spare CR123 batteries. (bhigear.com; 304-622-7000)

BRAVO COMPANY BCMGUNFIGHTER GRIP MOD 3

Offering a reduced angle for improved ergonomics and trigger control, the BCMGUNFIGHTER Grip Mod 3 is wider than the Mod 1 and Mod 2 pistol grips. It features an extended forward tang that is designed to close the gap between the triggerguard and pistol grip. A small water-resistant storage compartment is accessible by a hinged trapdoor at the base of the grip, and the backstrap is similar to a high-rise beavertail. (877-272-8626; bravocompanyusa.com)

BRAVO COMPANY KMR HANDGUARD

The KMR (KeyMod Rail) system provides a great deal of tactical flexibility in what accessories are added to your rifle. Smaller than a conventional Picatinny rail, the handguard system has less bulk in hand. Available in a variety of lengths, the rails are made from a blended aluminum and magnesium alloy that is 30 to 40 percent lighter than aluminum. And if you need rail covers, BCM is now offering its KeyMod Rail Panels so operators can always stay in control. These ultra-slim rail covers



American Built Arms SBR P*Grip



Blackheart AR Sling Hook Mount Pistol Grip



Bravo Company BCM Gunfighter Grip MOD 3



Bravo Company Vertical Grip MOD 3



BlackHawk Carbine Quad-Rail



Bravo Company KMR Handguard & Rail Cover

feature aggressive, non-slip and non-reflective texturing. Ventilated for cooling, each panel is radiused to create a continuous "tube" surface when run on an octagonal-profile handguard, such as the BCM KMR. (bravocompanyusa.com; 877-272-8626)

BRAVO COMPANY VERTICAL GRIP MOD 3

Bravo Company Manufacturing's VG-1913 Mod 3 vertical foregrip directly mounts to a Picatinny rail via a patent-pending anchor system that not only secures grips, but spreads the energy and force throughout the accessory. The flat sides of the grip, along with an aggressive texture, give an operator better yaw control during firing. (877-272-8626; bravocompanyusa.com)

DANIEL DEFENSE SLIM RAIL

The free-floated SliM Rail (Slim, Lightweight, Modular) uses a KeyMod system for attaching accessories at the 3, 6 and 9 o'clock positions. Constructed of aircraft-grade 6061-T6 aluminum, the SliM offers an uninterrupted Picatinny top rail in three lengths: 9-, 12- and 15-inch options to fit your carbines and rifles with ease. The rails offer superior cooling and ergonomics while maintaining strength and durability. (866-554-4867; danieldefense.com)

DIAMONDHEAD VRS T-308L FREE-FLOATING HANDGUARD

The VRS T-308L Free-Floating Handguard will mount on a 7.62mm AR with a low-profile gas block. Made of 6061 aluminum, the VRS T-308L is sturdy and lightweight. The rounded shape is comfortable to hold for extended shooting sessions. The top rail offers numerous optics mounting options. Check the company's website for compatibility. (diamondhead-usa.com; 413-739-6970)

ERGO KEYMOD FORWARD RAIL

For additional rail space, or to add rails to an AR-15 without removing the standard handguard, Ergo offers the KeyMod Forward Rail (KFR) system. This unit mounts to a standard A2-type sight base and extends forward toward the muzzle of the gun. Made of 6061-T6 aluminum, the KFR has KeyMod attachment points on its four sides. No gunsmithing is required to install this made-in-the-U.S.A. rail system. (ergogrips.net; 877-281-3783)

GUNTEC USA THIN PROFILE HANDGUARD

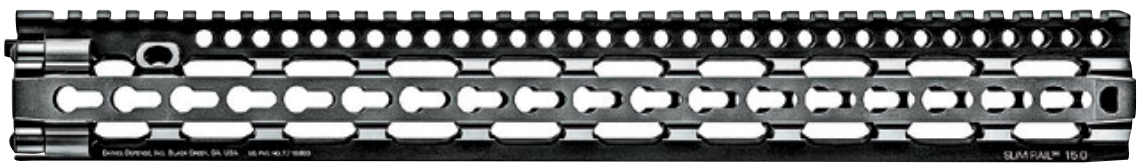
The free-floating, lightweight Thin Profile Handguard from Guntec USA has removable side and bottom rails and is made from light T6 aluminum. The top features a long monolithic rail, and the modular sectional rails are designed to be moved and attached to different positions on the handguard. Available in black and dark earth Cerakote finishes. (guntecusa.com; 480-478-4517)

HOGUE BEAVERTAIL GRIPS

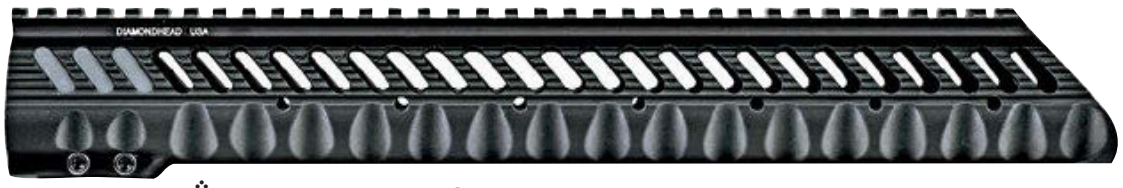
Incorporating ergonomics-enhancing finger grooves in the frontstrap and a comfortable texture for a secure grip, the Hogue OverMolded beavertail grip provides an extended length of pull and added support for the web of an operator's hand. It includes a trigger-guard filler and is available in black, OD green, Flat Dark Earth, Ghillie Green, Ghillie Earth, pink, purple and Red Lava. (hogueinc.com; 800-438-4747)

HOGUE FREE FLOAT FORENDS

When Hogue designed its Free Float Forends with OverMolded gripping areas, the company did not sacrifice shootability for the power to accessorize. These free-floating handguards have soft rubber gripping areas that maximize shooter control and comfort. The far end of the handguards makes it easy to add most accessories through the use of removable Picatinny rails. Available in several lengths, these handguards are made of hardcoat anodized 6061-T6 aluminum. (hogueinc.com; 800-438-4747)



Daniel Defense SLiM Rail



Diamondhead VRS T-308L Free-Floating Handguard



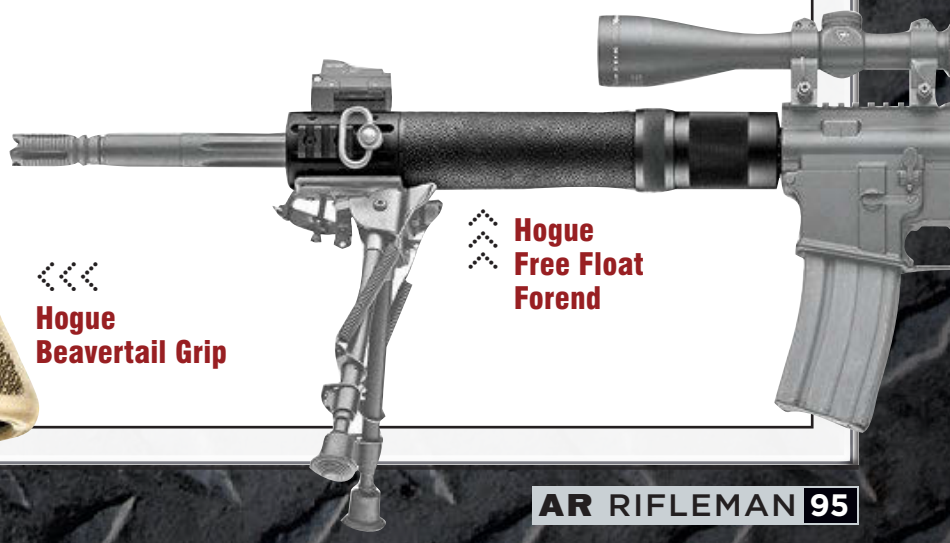
Ergo Keymod Forward Rail



Guntec USA Thin Profile Handguard



Hogue Beavertail Grip



Hogue Free Float Forend



Magpul
MOE M-LOK
Handguard



Midwest Industries
MI-SSK 12-Inch Keymod Rail



Sun Optics Usa
Tactical Grip /w
Laser & Light



Stark BRU
Pistol Grip



Mountain View
Designs PRV15
Tactical Foregrip



Magpul
MOE-K2 Grip



TacStar AR-15
Tactical Front &
Rear Grip Set

MAGPUL MOE M-LOK

Available in carbine, mid and rifle lengths, the MOE M-LOK handguards offer the weight and pricing benefits of polymer with the durability and performance the Magpul name is known for. The handguards offer secure Magpul M-LOK mounting points at the 2, 6 and 10 o'clock positions and provide exceptional shooter protection from a hot barrel and gas block. These handguards are available in black, Flat Dark Earth, OD green and stealth grey. (magpul.com; 877-462-4785)

MAGPUL MOE-K2+ GRIP

The reinforced polymer body construction and comfortable, wraparound rubber overmolding of the MOE-K2+ Grip gives a user maximum weapon control in adverse environments. This drop-in grip is easy to install and similar to Magpul's MOE-K, except that the MOE-K2+ is slightly larger for more of a full grip. Available in black, Flat Dark Earth, Stealth Gray or olive drab. (magpul.com; 877-462-4785)

MIDWEST INDUSTRIES MI-SSK 12-INCH KEYMOD RAIL

Slim and light while packing in a lot of performance, the MI-SSK KeyMod Rail in its 12-inch version weighs only 8.5 ounces. Made from 6061 aluminum and featuring a hardcoat anodized black finish, the top features a long Picatinny-style rail while the sides are KeyMod. Both rail types offer numerous attachment points for accessories. (midwestindustriesinc.com; 262-896-6780)

MOUNTAIN VIEW DESIGNS PRV15 TACTICAL FOREGRIP

The PRV15 grip from Mountain View Designs is a Picatinny rail-mounted foregrip with a V-shaped design that offers operators a 15-degree rotation of the handle. The grip is designed with operator comfort and stability in mind. A small Picatinny rail is attached to the grip so accessories are in easy reach without changing hand placement. (tacticallypractical.com)

STARK BRU PISTOL GRIP

The BRU (Basic Rifle Upgrade) Pistol Grip is similar to Stark's original grip, but it has no integral triggerguard so the BRU can be installed on nearly any AR platform, even those with billet lower receivers. The grip geometry offers a natural shooting hand position. The hand stop on the upper backstrap locks your hand in at the same position so your index finger is at the same angle to the trigger every time for consistency. (starkequipment.com; 603-556-7772)

SUN OPTICS USA TACTICAL GRIP WITH RED LASER AND WHITE LIGHT

This vertical grip from Sun Optics offers users a 250-lumen LED white light and a red laser. With the touch of a button, the two-stage laser can go from constant to strobe mode. The laser is also adjustable for windage and elevation. The unit mounts to any Picatinny-style rail and runs on two CR123A batteries. (sunopticsusa.com; 817-783-6001)

TACSTAR AR-15 TACTICAL FRONT & REAR GRIP SET

The ergonomic design and aggressive styling of the AR-15 Tactical Front & Rear Grip Set offer operators secure weapon handling in any environment. The finger-groove design of both the rear and front grip offer excellent control. The front grip can be pushed forward or aft to suit the situation. The grips are made from Pachmayr's recoil-absorbing Decelerator material. (tacstar.com; 800-225-9626)







TACTICAL GEAR HEADQUARTERS

SHOP WILSONCOMBAT.COM

SUPPRESSORS

Save your hearing, save relationships with the neighbors and fine-tune your shooting ability to stay on target. Suppressors are designed to reduce and minimize the sound created when the gases associated with firing a round expand. This is accomplished by forcing the gas through a specialized chamber inside the suppressor. The expansion chamber may contain a series of baffles or other chambers to re-route the gases, thereby reducing the sound when the gases leave the forward end of the suppressor. The other primary sound associated with a firearm is the sonic "crack."

According to the American Silencer Association, "The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) states that the threshold for hearing-safe impulse noise is 140 decibels. Without hearing protection, exposure to any impulse noise over 140 decibels causes varying degrees of permanent hearing loss, which can also lead to tinnitus. Most well-engineered silencers take the decibel level of their host firearm below 140 decibels, making those silencers effective primary hearing safety devices."

Here's the hot list of cutting-edge sound suppressors on the market for today's on-point shooters!

—ARCR Staff Report

AAC ILLUSION 9

Let's talk pistol-caliber suppressors. The Illusion 9 from Advanced Armament Corporation (AAC) is an entirely new silencer concept. The eccentric (offset) design is low enough to allow for the unobstructed use of factory-height sights. This user-serviceable 9mm pistol silencer features seven conical aluminum baffles, a stainless steel blast baffle and an aluminum outer tube with a hardcoat anodized finish. The Illusion 9 is 7.88 inches long, 1.25 inches in diameter, weighs 10.4 ounces and has a rated sound reduction of 33 decibels. (advanced-armament.com; 770-925-9988)

AWC ULTRA 13 MATCH

AWC is one of the oldest suppressor manufacturers, and it now offers over 20 suppressors for pistol, rifles and submachine guns. New for 2015 are the Marauder quick-disconnect rifle suppressor and several improved integral suppressors for the Ruger Mark III and Browning Buck Mark pistols as well as Ruger's 10/22 and 77/44 rifles. Another addition to AWC's lineup is the Ultra 13 Match, an integrally suppressed .22 LR rifle. The Ultra 13 Match resembles a 10/22 but is actually a Primary Weapons Systems Summit receiver with a Hogue stock and a 16.5-inch Shaw match barrel. (awcsilencers.com; 800-401-7269)

BLACK RAIN ORDNANCE

Black Rain Ordnance's outside-the-box thinking is clearly evident in the company's line of Precision silencers. Featuring patented Epilson baffle technology and manufactured from high-grade stainless steel, these silencers are very simple to disassemble, clean and reassemble after use. Three models are currently available: the "Universal" for .22 rimfires, the "ARIS" for .223s and the "M30" for .308, which will handle up to the .300 Win Mag. All three are full-auto rated and can be run on barrels down to 10.5 inches. A high-quality nitride finish not only increases durability but also aids in ease of cleaning. The full line of Black Rain Ordnance silencers are currently direct-thread models, but quick-detach systems and interchangeable end caps in development, which can be added by the user as they come to market. (blackrainordnance.com; 888-836-2620)

DEAD AIR SILENCERS SANDMAN-L

Dead Air Silencers is a new name to the market, but it's certainly not inexperienced. Led by suppressor design





AWC Ultra 13 Match

AWC Marauder Quick-Disconnect Suppressor



Today's suppressors are more versatile and durable than ever before. High notes include (from left to right) the Black Rain Ordnance Aris, Dead Air Silencers Sandman-L, EliteIron CQC, EliteIron Delta, Gemtech GTSOC Pro, Gemtech's "The One," Liberty Suppressors' integral suppressor on the Rhino Arms RA-4R ISR and the MasterPiece Arms 308S.

veteran Mike Pappas, Dead Air makes extremely durable, high-performance suppressors. Its new 7.62mm Sandman-L is rated for up to .300 Win Mag use and is only 8.9 inches long and 1.5 inches wide but delivers a stated sound reduction of 31 decibels using 7.62mm NATO ammunition. This suppressor is tuned for low backpressure and has a removable end cap that acts as a flash suppressor. The Sandman-L mounts to Dead Air's nitride-finished stainless steel muzzle brake. Alignment, attachment and gas seal are accomplished with a tapered cone with a secondary lug for additional securement. (877-892-7544; deadairsilencers.com)

ELITEIRON CQC & DELTA

EliteIron's centerfire rifle suppressors are made with stainless steel tubes finished with Cerakote. The core is fully welded for structural strength and durability and made from stainless modified K baffles. For 5.56mm rifles, three models are offered that differ with respect to length and sound reduction. This includes the 5.35-inch, 14.5-ounce, full-auto-rated CQC (33-decibel reduction) and the 6.5-inch CQC Elite (34-decibel reduction). The third is the direct-thread, 7.5-inch, 21-ounce Delta (35-decibel reduction). All three have 1.5-inch diameter tubes and 1/2x28 threads. Buyers of the CQC and CQC Elite also get a 1/2x28-threaded muzzle brake and a cap that redirects blast and sound away at close quarters when the rifle is unsuppressed. (eliteiron.com; 406-244-0234)

GEMTECH GTSOC PRO

Off the AR track, we bring you news that Gemtech partnered with Kimber to produce a specialized 1911 and suppressor combo kit. The GTSOC kit comes with a Kimber custom 1911 pistol, a Gemtech GM-45 sound suppressor, three magazines and an APL Inforce weapon light—all in a custom fitted nylon case. The GM-45 suppressor included in the GTSOC kit is 6.2 inches long without the piston and 1.25 inches in diameter, and it weighs only 5.5 ounces without the piston due to its 7075-T6 aluminum construction. The Gemtech GM-45 is rated for fully automatic firing. It's also completely finished in durable Cerakote and uses a G-Core Monocore. Finally, the GM-45 suppressor has a stated dry/wet sound reduction of 23/35 decibels. (gem-tech.com; 208-939-7222)

GEMTECH'S "THE ONE"

Tested to USSOCOM standards, Gemtech's new "The One" suppressor handles several calibers. It is full-auto rated in 10-inch or longer barrels in 5.56mm NATO, semi-auto in 16-inch or longer barrels in 7.62mm NATO and 24-inch barrels in .300 Winchester Magnum. The One is made with an Inconel Blast Baffle and a titanium tube, and uses Gemtech's quick-attach mount. (gem-tech.com; 208-939-7222)

LIBERTY SUPPRESSORS

Liberty Suppressors makes several muzzle-mounted and integral suppressors, including those used in the Rhino Arms family of precision rifles, such as the RA-4R ISR, which is an AR-15-style short-barreled rifle (SBR) chambered in the increasingly popular 300 Blackout. The Liberty suppressor equipped on the ISR, with its titanium monocore, is permanently attached to the SBR's short 7.5-inch barrel for an overall length of 16.1 inches, thus it is subject to only one NFA transfer tax. (libertycans.net; 706-661-6911)

MASTERPIECE ARMS 308S

MasterPiece Arms makes semi-automatic pistols and rifles and five different suppressors for .22 LR, 9mm, 5.56mm NATO and .308 Winchester firearms.



The MPA 308S suppressor is made for .308 Winchester and 300 Blackout rifles with threaded barrels. It is a monocore design that uses 17-4 stainless steel for the core and 304L stainless for the tube and end cap. The unit is finished with Cerakote. The MPA 308S is 1.5 inches in diameter, 9.3 inches long and weighs 23 ounces. (masterpiecearms.com; 770-832-9430)

SIG SAUER SRD762-QD

The Sig Sauer SRD762-QD silencer is only 7 inches long and 1.625 inches wide and weighs 17 ounces. It is rated for the 7.62mm NATO, 300 BLK and .300 Win Mag. Made from stainless steel and nickel alloy, the baffles on this suppressor are welded together in a stack without an additional tube to save weight and cost, and they have a PVD finish. Just as unusual, however, is Sig's unique modular Taper-Lok fast-attach mount that is included with the suppressor. (Most companies sell the required mount separately.) The Taper-Lok mount allows the user to easily set the position of the muzzle brake or flash suppressor with a crush washer. There are no mechanical teeth or ratchet system to wear out, and removing the suppressor is done by hand, though the suppressor has wrench flats if required. (sigsauer.com; 603-610-3000)

STEALTH ENGINEERING GROUP

Stealth Engineering Group (SEG) is a new company that makes four suppressor models that can be custom configured to the user's specifications. All four models use monocore baffles, and both the core and the tube can be made with any combination of aluminum, stainless steel or titanium. Customers can also order suppressors in a wide variety of calibers and several finishes. Customers who select a titanium tube have an unusual variety of optional finishes, including camo, rings and a swirl pattern. The four models range in size from the Independent, which is 1 inch in diameter and 6.125 inches long, to the Hancock model suppressor, which is 1.5 inches in diameter and 8.9 inches long. (segsuppressors.com)



SUREFIRE RYDER 9-TI

SureFire has become a standard bearer in the rifle suppressor market, no doubt, and it's pistol-caliber cans are right there, too. SureFire's Ryder 9-Ti is 7.6 inches long and weighs 9.5 ounces with the piston. At only 1.25 inches wide, no special high-profile sights are needed on the host pistol. The Ryder 9-Ti uses a titanium tube and end caps coated in grey, black or Flat Dark Earth Cerakote. Inside, there are five heat-treated stainless steel baffles and one spacer that are numbered and notched for correct and quick reassembly after cleaning. The SureFire Ryder 9-Ti is sold with an assembly/disassembly tool that easily removes and reinstalls the baffles as a single-stacked unit. (surefire.com; 800-828-8809)

THUNDER BEAST ULTRA

Thunder Beast's new Ultra suppressors are designed for calibers up to .300 Win Mag and are made entirely of titanium with fully welded cores for strength. (Direct-thread models use a 17-4 stainless steel blast shield.) Ultra suppressors mount with direct threads or to the company's Compact Brake muzzle brake or flash suppressor. The CB mount uses a tapered cone to lock the suppressor to the mount. The mounting method (thread or CB) can also be changed by the factory without



needing to buy an additional suppressor. Ultra cans are 1.5 inches in diameter and come in three lengths: 5, 7 or 9 inches. They weigh only 7.6 to 11.9 ounces with the CB mount and 9.4 to 13.7 ounces with direct-thread mounts. (307-287- 2052; thunderbeastarms.com)

WILSON COMBAT WHISPER

Best known for its very high-quality 1911 pistols, AR-15 rifles and customizations for Remington 870 shotguns, Wilson Combat recently introduced its first line of suppressors. The Whisper line is made of titanium and comes in one external size that can be configured into four different bore diameters: 9mm, 5.56mm, 7.62mm and 6.8mm. All Whisper suppressors use a monocore design welded to a 6.3-inch-long, 1.875-inch-diameter tube that weighs only 17.8 ounces. Whisper suppressors use a quick-attach mount to attach to a Wilson stainless steel and nitride-finished muzzle brake that is included with the suppressor. Suppressor tubes come standard with a bead-blasted finish with an optional heat-resistant Armor-Tuff coating in black, grey, OD, desert tan or Flat Dark Earth. (wilsoncombat.com; 870-545-3618)

BELOW: Wilson Combat Whisper

RIGHT: Yankee Hill Machine Sidewinder





YANKEE HILL MACHINE SIDEWINDER

Yankee Hill Machine (YHM) makes rifle, pistol and submachine gun suppressors. For 2015, the company will offer the “hearing safe” Sidewinder suppressor in 9mm, .40 and .45 ACP. All Sidewinders are 1.375 inches in diameter but have different lengths depending on caliber: 7.8 inches for the 9mm, and 8.75 inches for the .40 and .45 ACP. Their construction is also consistent, with the monocore baffle made from hardcoat anodized 7075-T6 aluminum and housed in a tube made from 6061-T6 aluminum. The booster assembly and mount are made from 17-4PH stainless steel. The Sidewinder can also be quickly disassembled for maintenance. All Yankee Hill Machine rifle and handgun sound suppressors come with a lifetime warranty. (yhm.net; 877-892-6533)

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TOP SHOT AR BLACK GUNS

Rifle racks bristling with black flash suppressors and polymer pistol grips can induce boredom. Still, even riflemen weaned on hand-checkered French are impressed by Eugene Stoner's space gun of the 1960s. The Armalite in 5.56mm NATO became the AR-15 autoloader and M16 selective-fire rifle.

I'll not burn page space detailing differences between the 5.56mm cartridge and chamber, and those of its sporting version, the .223 Remington. Most civilian shooters with AR-15s load up with .223 ammo. It's good ammo largely because, like the .30-06 and .308 preceding it, the .223 owns a military heritage, was cleverly designed and is widely chambered in bolt rifles as well as so-called "black guns." Over the years, the .223 has benefited from some aggressive development.

Initially, the M16 couldn't match the reach or accuracy of the M14 or M1 Garand in service-rifle competitions. After many refinements, the AR-15 shoots about as well as tuned bolt-action rifles.

The .223 Remington now comes in myriad forms, with bullets of 35 to 77 grains, and velocities up to 4,000 fps. You can pick full-jacketed, hollow-point, polymer-tipped or traditional soft-nose bullets.

As versatile as the .223 Remington has become, it's still a .22. Bright prospects for the AR platform in police and military units, and a growing fan base among civilian shooters, have yielded new powerhouse chamberings. In the following pages, you'll get a look at some of today's best new multi-purpose rifles, in all manner of chamberings, from the top makers in the industry. *—Wayne van Zwoll*



ALEXANDER ARMS .17 HMR

CALIBER: .17 HMR • **BARREL:** 18 inches • **WEIGHT:** 7.5 pounds
STOCK: Collapsible • **SIGHTS:** None • **ACTION:** Blowback, semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 10+1• **MSRP:** $1,210



ALEXANDER ARMS ULFBERHT

CALIBER: .338 Lapua Magnum • **BARREL:** 27.5 inches
WEIGHT: 19.8 pounds • **STOCK:** Folding Magpul PRS
SIGHTS: None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Matte black
CAPACITY: 10+1 • **MSRP:** $6,850



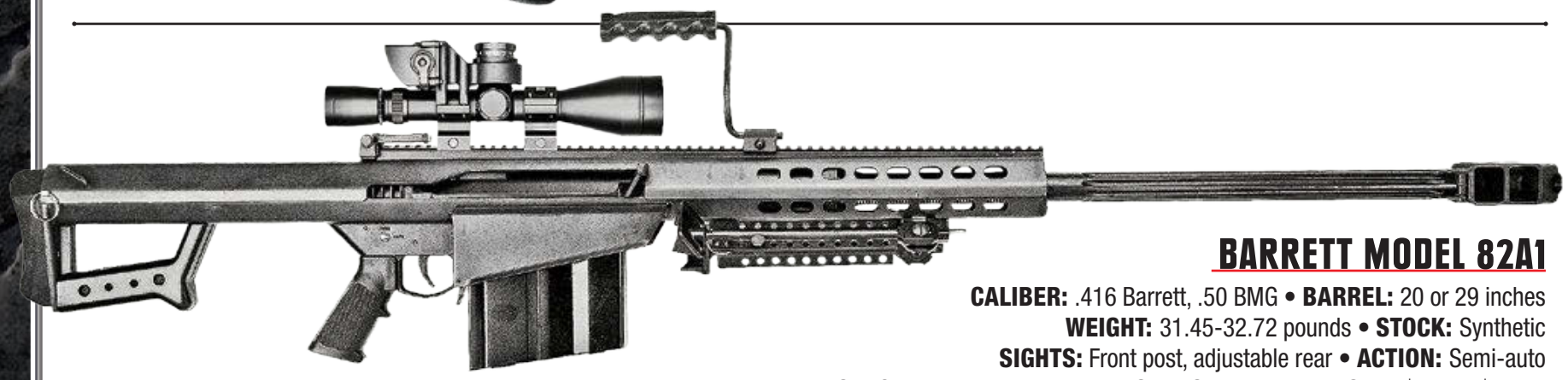
ARMALITE AR-10 3-GUN

CALIBER: 7.62mm NATO • **BARREL:** 18 inches
WEIGHT: 8.9 pounds • **STOCK:** Luth-AR MBA-1 • **SIGHTS:** None
ACTION: Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Matte black
CAPACITY: 25+1 • **MSRP:** $2,099



ARMALITE M-15 VERSATILE SPORTING RIFLE

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 18 inches • **WEIGHT:** 7.5 pounds
STOCK: Luth-AR MBA-1 • **SIGHTS:** None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 20+1 • **MSRP:** $1,299



BARRETT MODEL 82A1

CALIBER: .416 Barrett, .50 BMG • **BARREL:** 20 or 29 inches
WEIGHT: 31.45-32.72 pounds • **STOCK:** Synthetic
SIGHTS: Front post, adjustable rear • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Several options available • **CAPACITY:** 10+1 • **MSRP:** $9,119-$9,323



BARRETT REC7 GEN II

CALIBER: 5.56mm, 6.8 SPC • **BARREL:** 11.5, 16 or 18 inches
WEIGHT: 7.2-7.9 pounds• **STOCK:** Collapsible
SIGHTS: Flip-up front and rear • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Cerakote • **CAPACITY:** 10+1, 20+1, 30+1 • **MSRP:** $2,151-$3,159



BERETTA ARX100

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16 inches
WEIGHT: 6.8 pounds • **STOCK:** Collapsible
SIGHTS: Flip-up front, combat rear • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1• **MSRP:** $1,950



BLACK RAIN ORDNANCE PG15

CALIBER: 7.62mm NATO • **BARREL:** 18 inches
WEIGHT: 8.1 pounds • **STOCK:** Magpul MOE-SL/BLK
SIGHTS: None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Black
CAPACITY: 20+1• **MSRP:** $2,809



BLACK RAIN ORDNANCE PG5/PG9

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16 inches
WEIGHT: 6.7 pounds • **STOCK:** Magpul MOE-SL/BLK • **SIGHTS:** None
ACTION: Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Black, Norguard
CAPACITY: 30+1 • **MSRP:** $2,109



BRAVO COMPANY EAG TACTICAL

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO
BARREL: 14.5 inches (16 w/A2 flash suppressor)
WEIGHT: 7.5 pounds • **STOCK:** Collapsible
SIGHTS: A2 front, Troy/Bravo folding rear • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:** $2,263



BRAVO COMPANY MID-16 MOD 2

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16 inches
WEIGHT: 6.7 pounds • **STOCK:** Collapsible
SIGHTS: A2 front, Troy/Bravo folding • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,534



BRAVO COMPANY RECCE-14 KMR-A

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO
BARREL: 14.5 inches (16 w/welded compensator)
WEIGHT: 6 pounds • **STOCK:** Collapsible
SIGHTS: None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,500



BRAVO COMPANY RECCE-18 KMR-A PRECISION

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 18 inches • **WEIGHT:** 7 pounds
STOCK: Collapsible • **SIGHTS:** None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,650



BUSHMASTER ACR

CALIBER: 5.56mm, 6.8 SPC • **BARREL:** 16.5 inches
WEIGHT: 8.2 pounds • **STOCK:** Folding, composite
SIGHTS: Magpul MBUS • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Black, coyote brown **CAPACITY:** 30+1
MSRP: $2,149-$2,249



BUSHMASTER CARBINES

CALIBER: 5.56mm, .308, .450 Bushmaster
BARREL: 16 inches • **WEIGHT:** 5.5-8.5 pounds • **STOCKS:** Polymer
SIGHTS: A2 front, A2 and A3 rear sights, flip-up rear
ACTION: Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Parkerized
CAPACITY: 5+1, 10+1, 20+1, 30+1 • **MSRP:** $739-$1,299



BUSHMASTER RIFLES

CALIBER: 5.56mm, .450 Bushmaster, .308
BARREL: 20 or 24 inches • **WEIGHT:** 8.4-13 pounds
STOCK: Polymer • **SIGHTS:** M16A2 dual aperture rear
ACTION: Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Parkerized
CAPACITY: 5+1, 10+1, 20+1, 30+1 • **MSRP:** $969-$1,299



COLT LE6920/LE6940

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16.1 inches
WEIGHT: 6.29-7.2 pounds • **STOCK:** Collapsible
SIGHTS: A2 or flip-up front, flip-up rear • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:** $999-$1,399



COLT M.A.R.C. 901

CALIBER: .308 (convertible to 5.56mm) • **BARREL:** 16.1 inches
WEIGHT: 8.25-8.5 pounds • **STOCK:** Collapsible
SIGHTS: None, flip-up • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 20+1 • **MSRP:** $1,399-$1,999



DANIEL DEFENSE DD5V1

CALIBER: 7.62mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16 inches • **WEIGHT:** 8.3 pounds
STOCK: Collapsible • **SIGHTS:** None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 20+1 • **MSRP:** $2,899



DANIEL DEFENSE DDM4V11SLW

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 14.5 inches
WEIGHT: 6.09 pounds • **STOCK:** Collapsible • **SIGHTS:** None
ACTION: Semi-auto• **FINISH:** Matte black
CAPACITY: 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,669



DARK STORM DS-15 LIGHTNING

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16 inches
WEIGHT: 7.4 pounds • **STOCKS:** Magpul CTR, Magpul MOE
SIGHTS: None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,195



DEL-TON ECHO 316

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16 inches
WEIGHT: 6.2 pounds • **STOCKS:** Collapsible
SIGHTS: A2 front • **ACTION:** Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Matte black
CAPACITY: 30+1 • **MSRP:** $788 (CA legal: $800)



DEL-TON EVOLUTION

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16 inches
WEIGHT: 6.8 pounds • **STOCK:** Magpul CTR
SIGHTS: Samson front and rear • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,299



DEL-TON SIERRA 316

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16 inches
WEIGHT: 7.01-7.4 pounds• **STOCKS:** A2, collapsible, Magpul MOE
SIGHTS: A2 front • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:** $858



DIAMONDBACK DB15

CALIBER: 5.56mm, 300 BLK • **BARREL:** 16 inches
WEIGHT: 6.7-6.9 pounds • **STOCKS:** ATI Strikeforce, Magpul CTR
SIGHTS: None, A2 front • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Many options available • **CAPACITY:** 10+1, 30+1
MSRP: $756-$1,949



DPMS GII COMPACT HUNTER

CALIBER: Over 10 calibers from .22LR to 7.62mm
BARREL: 16, 18, 20 or 24 inches • **WEIGHT:** 6.1-16 pounds
STOCKS: A2, AP4, Pardus, Magpul, LMT • **SIGHTS:** Military A1, A2 and A3/A4
ACTION: Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Many options available
CAPACITY: 4+1, 10+1, 19+1, 20+1, 25+1, 30+1 • **MSRP:** $700-$2,500



DRD TACTICAL CDR-15

CALIBER: 5.56mm, 300 BLK
BARREL: 16 inches
OA LENGTH: 32-36 inches • **WEIGHT:** 6.9 pounds (empty)
STOCK: Magpul MOE • **SIGHTS:** None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:** $2,091-$2,200



FN 15 DMR

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 18 inches
WEIGHT: 6.6 pounds • **STOCKS:** Fixed, collapsible
SIGHTS: Folding front and rear • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,899



FN SCAR

CALIBER: 5.56mm, 7.62mm • **BARREL:** 16.25 inches
WEIGHT: 7.25-8 pounds • **STOCKS:** Adjustable composite
SIGHTS: Adjustable folding • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black, Flat Dark Earth
CAPACITY: 10+1, 20+1, 30+1 • **MSRP:** $2,995-$3,349



HECKLER & KOCH MR556A1

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16.5 inches
WEIGHT: 8.6 pounds • **STOCKS:** Collapsible
SIGHTS: None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto **FINISH:** Matte black
CAPACITY: 10+1, 30+1 • **MSRP:** $3,399



HECKLER & KOCH MR762A1

CALIBER: 7.62mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16.6 inches
WEIGHT: 9.6 pounds • **STOCKS:** Collapsible
SIGHTS: None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Matte black
CAPACITY: 10+1, 20+1 • **MSRP:** $3,995



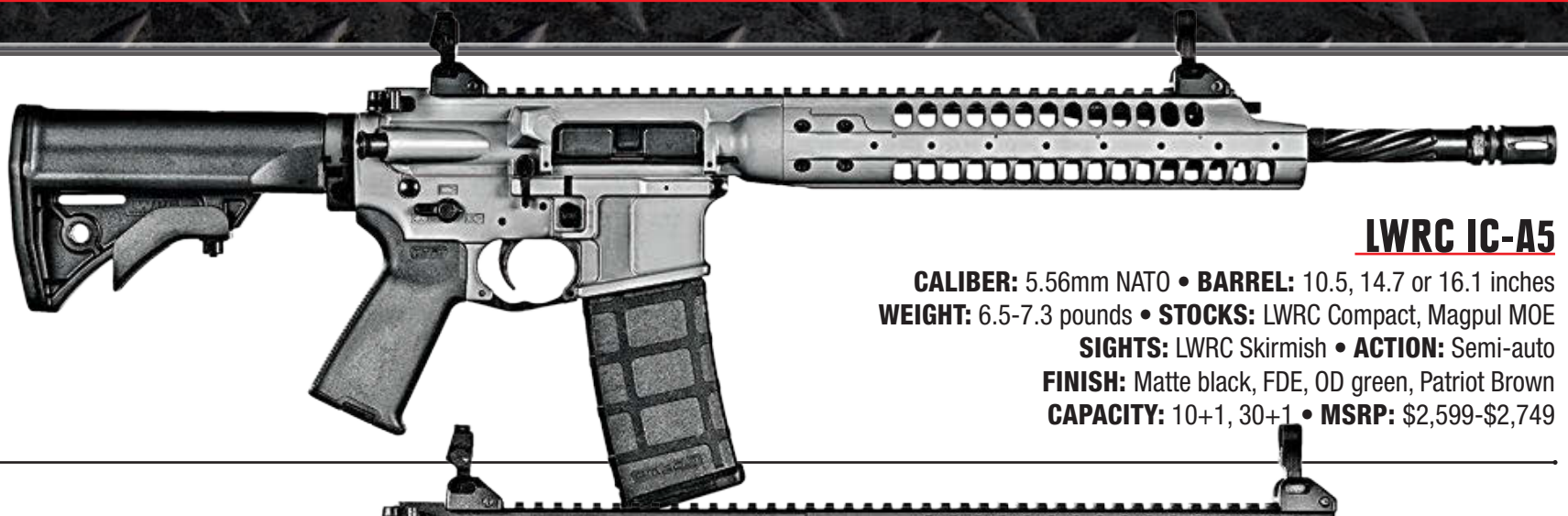
IWI GALIL ACE

CALIBER: 7.62x39mm • **BARREL:** 16 inches • **WEIGHT:** 7.5 pounds
STOCK: Polymer • **SIGHTS:** Adjustable with tritium • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:**$1,899-$2,099



LEWIS MACHINE & TOOL SHARPSHOOTER

CALIBER: 7.62mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16 inches • **WEIGHT:** 9.97 pounds
STOCK: SOPMOD collapsible • **SIGHTS:** Flip-up front and rear
ACTION: Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Matte black
CAPACITY: 20+1 **MSRP:** $5,200 (sold as kit)



LWRC IC-A5

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 10.5, 14.7 or 16.1 inches
WEIGHT: 6.5-7.3 pounds • **STOCKS:** LWRC Compact, Magpul MOE
SIGHTS: LWRC Skirmish • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black, FDE, OD green, Patriot Brown
CAPACITY: 10+1, 30+1 • **MSRP:** $2,599-$2,749



LWRC IC-SPR

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 14.7 or 16.1 inches
WEIGHT: 7-7.3 pounds • **STOCKS:** LWRC Compact, Magpul MOE
SIGHTS: LWRC Skirmish • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black, FDE, OD green, Patriot Brown
CAPACITY: 10+1, 30+1 • **MSRP:** $2,349-$2,499



MOSSBERG INTERNATIONAL 715T

CALIBER: .22 LR • **BARREL:** 16.25-18 inches
WEIGHT: 5.25-5.7 pounds • **STOCKS:** Fixed, collapsible
SIGHTS: Adjustable, red-dot combo • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Blued • **CAPACITY:** 10+1, 25+1 • **MSRP:** $308-$509



MOSSBERG MMR

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO •**BARREL:** 16.25 (Tactical) or 20 (Hunter) inches
WEIGHT: 7-7.5 pounds • **STOCKS:** Fixed, collapsible
SIGHTS: Adjustable front and rear (Tactical) • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black or camo • **CAPACITY:** 10+1, 30+1 • **MSRP:** $987-$1,127



PATRIOT ORDNANCE P-15 PURITAN

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16.5 inches
WEIGHT: 6.7 pounds • **STOCK:** Magpul MOE
SIGHTS: None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,470



PATRIOT ORDNANCE SKIRMISH HEAVY

CALIBER: 7.62mm (Skirmish Light 5.56mm also available)
BARREL: 16.5 inches • **WEIGHT:** 8.4 pounds
STOCK: Fixed Magpul MOE • **SIGHTS:** None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: NP3 • **CAPACITY:** 20+1 • **MSRP:** $2,860



PATRIOT ORDNANCE WAR HOG LIGHT

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16.5 inches
WEIGHT: 7.4 pounds • **STOCK:** Luth-AR MBA • **SIGHTS:** None
ACTION: Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Burnt Bronze Cerakote
CAPACITY: 30+1 • **MSRP:** $2,350



PATRIOT ORDNANCE FACTORY P308

CALIBER: 7.62mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16.5 inches
WEIGHT: 8.3 pounds • **STOCK:** Magpul CTR
SIGHTS: None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: NP3 • **CAPACITY:** 20+1 • **MSRP:** $2,730



REMINGTON CENTERFIRE

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO, 7.62 NATO
BARREL: 18, 18.5, 20, 22 or 24 inches • **WEIGHT:** 6.75-8.75 pounds
STOCKS: Synthetic A2, Remington Hunter • **SIGHTS:** None, iron (750)
ACTION: Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Many options available
CAPACITY: 4+1, 5+1 • **MSRP:** $815-$1,697



ROCK ISLAND ARMORY SEMI-AUTO

CALIBER: .22 LR **BARREL:** 18 inches
WEIGHT: 6.24-7 pounds • **STOCKS:** Wood, polymer
SIGHTS: Front post, rear peep/ghost ring style • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 10+1, 15+1 • **MSRP:** N/A



ROCK RIVER ARMS X-SERIES

CALIBER: 5.56mm, 6.8 SPC, 300 BLK, 7.62mm NATO, 7.62x39mm .458 SOCOM
BARREL: 18 inches • **WEIGHT:** 7.7-8.7 pounds
STOCKS: RRA Operator CAR, A2 • **SIGHTS:** None
ACTION: Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Matte black, Flat Dark Earth
CAPACITY: 10+1, 20+1, 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,495-$1,895



ROCK RIVER ARMS LAR-8

CALIBER: 7.62mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16, 20 or 26 inches
WEIGHT: 7-11.6 pounds • **STOCKS:** Tactical or RRA Operator CAR, A2
SIGHTS: Multiple options • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 20+1 • **MSRP:** $1,335-$1,740



RUGER AR-556/SR-556TD

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16.1 inches (takedown for SR-556TD)
WEIGHT: 6.5-7.94 pounds • **STOCK:** Collapsible
SIGHTS: Folding, adjustable front post • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 10+1, 30+1 • **MSRP:** $749-$2,049



RUGER SR-762

CALIBER: 7.62mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16.12 inches
WEIGHT: 8.6 pounds • **STOCK:** Collapsible
SIGHTS: Folding • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 20+1 • **MSRP:** $2,269



SEEKINS PRECISION COMBAT BILLET RIFLE

CALIBER: .223 Wylde, 300 BLK • **BARREL:** 16 inches
WEIGHT: 7.2 pounds **STOCK:** Magpul MOE • **SIGHTS:** None
ACTION: Semi-auto**FINISH:** Matte black, stainless
CAPACITY: 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,850



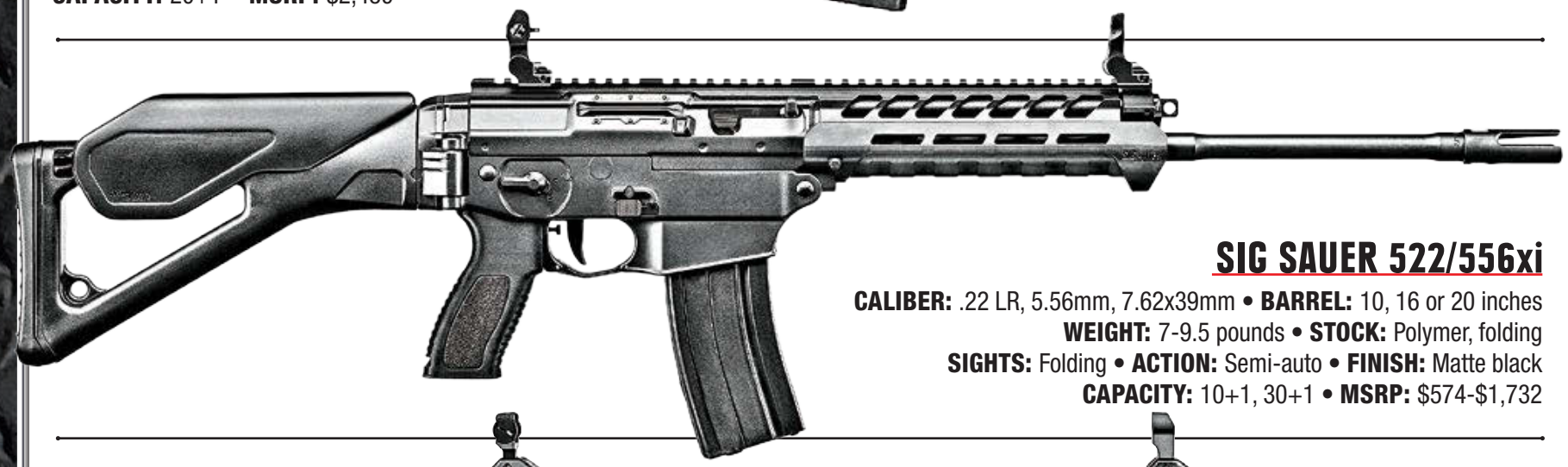
SEEKINS PRECISION PRO SERIES

CALIBER: .223 Wylde, 300 BLK • **BARREL:** 16 or 18 inches
WEIGHT: 7.5-8.5 pounds • **STOCK:** Magpul STR • **SIGHTS:** None
ACTION: Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Matte black, stainless
CAPACITY: 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,995-$2,250



SEEKINS PRECISION SP10

CALIBER: 7.62mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16 or 18 inches
WEIGHT: 8.9 pounds • **STOCK:** Magpul STR • **SIGHTS:** None
ACTION: Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Matte black, stainless
CAPACITY: 20+1 • **MSRP:** $2,489



SIG SAUER 522/556xi

CALIBER: .22 LR, 5.56mm, 7.62x39mm • **BARREL:** 10, 16 or 20 inches
WEIGHT: 7-9.5 pounds • **STOCK:** Polymer, folding
SIGHTS: Folding • **ACTION:** Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Matte black
CAPACITY: 10+1, 30+1 • **MSRP:** $574-$1,732



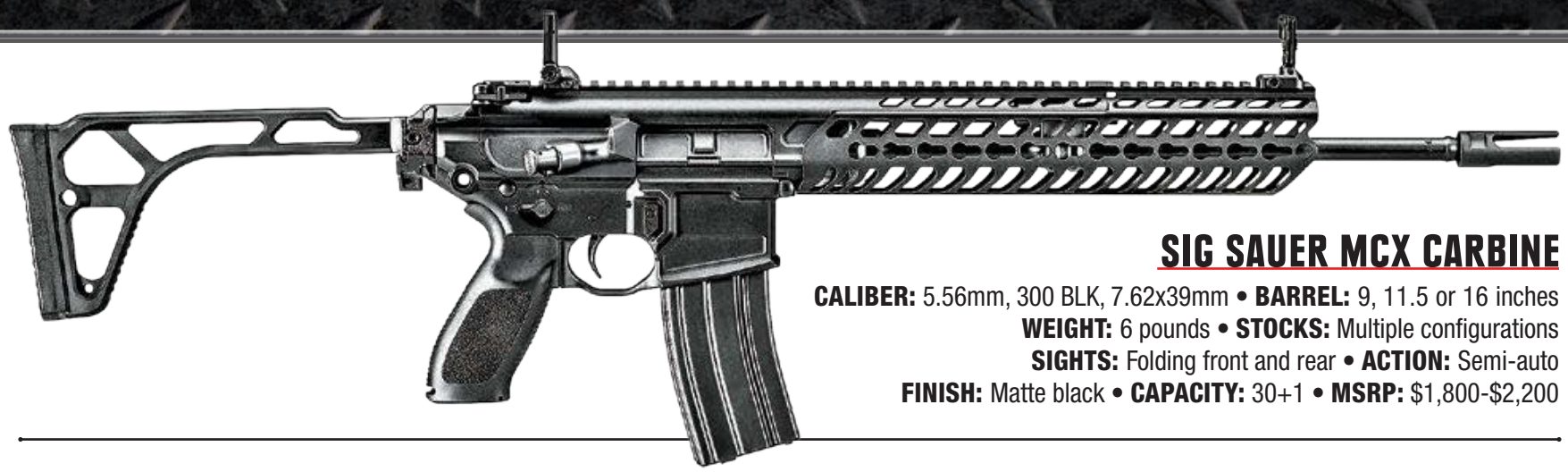
SIG SAUER 716

CALIBER: 7.62mm (516 in 5.56mm also available)
BARREL: 12.5, 16 or 18 inches • **WEIGHT:** 9-10.2 pounds
STOCKS: SOPMOD, Magpul PRS or ACS • **SIGHTS:** Folding
ACTION: Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Matte black or Flat Dark Earth
CAPACITY: 20+1 • **MSRP:** $2,186-$2,799



SIG SAUER M400

CALIBER: 5.56mm, 300 BLK • **BARREL:** 9, 11.5, 16 or 18 inches
WEIGHT: 6.1-7.8 pounds • **STOCK:** Collapsible
SIGHTS: A2 front, aperture or folding rear • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black, camo or Flat Dark Earth
CAPACITY: 5+1, 10+1, 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,119-$2,132



SIG SAUER MCX CARBINE

CALIBER: 5.56mm, 300 BLK, 7.62x39mm • **BARREL:** 9, 11.5 or 16 inches
WEIGHT: 6 pounds • **STOCKS:** Multiple configurations
SIGHTS: Folding front and rear • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,800-$2,200



SMITH & WESSON M&P

CALIBER: .22 LR, 5.56mm, 7.62mm, .300 Whisper
BARREL: 16, 16.5, 18 or 20 inches • **WEIGHT:** 5-8.2 pounds
STOCKS: Collapsible, fixed • **SIGHTS:** Adjustable, none
ACTION: Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Many options available
CAPACITY: 5+1, 10+1, 25+1, 30+1 • **MSRP:** $519-$1,619



STAG ARMS MODEL 3

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16 inches • **WEIGHT:** 6.1 pounds
STOCK: Collapsible • **SIGHTS:** None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:** $895-$920



STAG ARMS MODEL 3G

CALIBER: 5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 18 inches • **WEIGHT:** 7.8 pounds
STOCK: Magpul ACS • **SIGHTS:** None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,459-$1,479



STAG ARMS MODEL 7

CALIBER: 6.8 SPC • **BARREL:** 20.77 inches
WEIGHT: 7.8 pounds • **STOCK:** A2 • **SIGHTS:** None
ACTION: Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Matte black
CAPACITY: 5+1 • **MSRP:** $1,055-$1,095



WILSON COMBAT RECON TACTICAL

CALIBER: 5.56mm, 6.8 SPC, 300 BLK, 7.62x40 WT, .450 SOCOM (SR Tactical only) • **BARREL:** 14.7, 16, 18 or 20 inches
WEIGHT: 6.6-7 pounds • **STOCK:** Rogers Super-Stoc
SIGHTS: None **ACTION:** Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Armor-Tuff
CAPACITY: 15+1, 20+1, 30+1 • **MSRP:** N/A



WILSON COMBAT SUPER SNIPER

CALIBER: 7.62mm NATO • **BARREL:** 14.7, 16, 18 or 20 inches
WEIGHT: 7.7-9.45 pounds • **STOCK:** Rogers Super-Stoc
SIGHTS: None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Armor-Tuff
CAPACITY: 10+1, 20+1 • **MSRP:** N/A



WINDHAM WEAPONRY CDI

CALIBER: .223/5.56mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16 inches
WEIGHT: 7 pounds • **STOCK:** Magpul MOE
SIGHTS: Diamondhead flip-up • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,680



WINDHAM WEAPONRY SRC-308

CALIBER: 7.62mm NATO • **BARREL:** 16.5 inches
WEIGHT: 7.6 pounds • **STOCK:** Collapsible • **SIGHTS:** None
ACTION: Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Matte black
CAPACITY: 20+1 • **MSRP:** $1,413



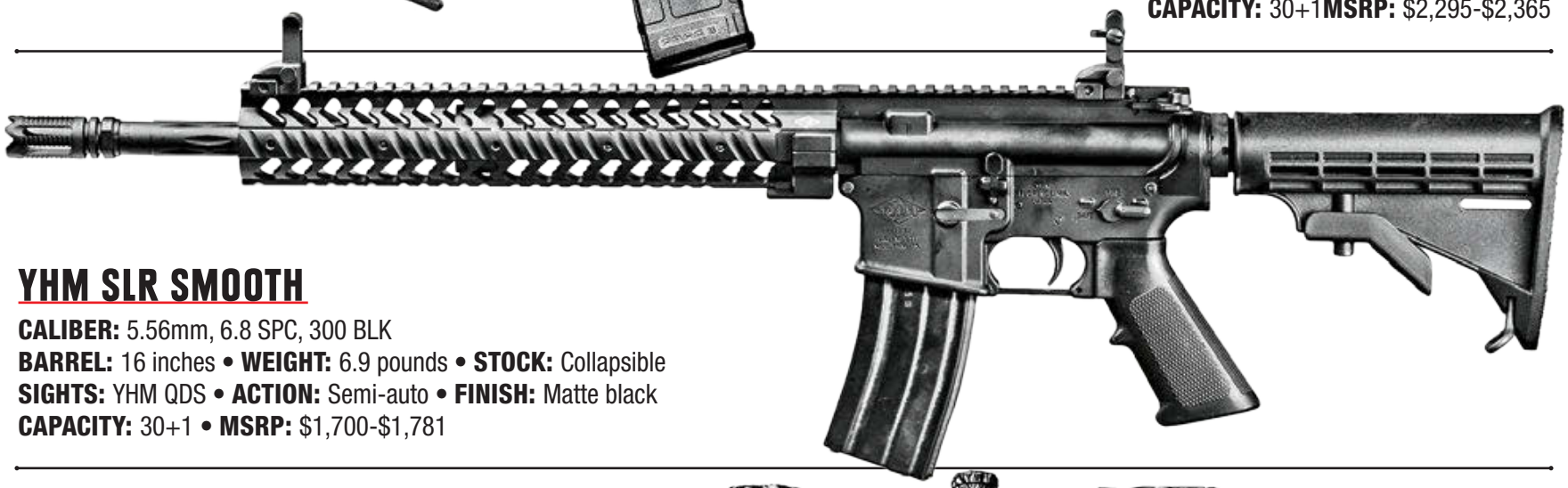
WINDHAM WEAPONRY VARMINT EXTERMINATOR

CALIBER: .233 Remington • **BARREL:** 20 inches • **WEIGHT:** 8.2 pounds
STOCK: Skeletonized • **SIGHTS:** None • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black • **CAPACITY:** 5+1 • **MSRP:** $1,295



YHM MODEL 57 XL

CALIBER: 5.56mm, 6.8 SPC, 300 BLK • **BARREL:** 16 inches
WEIGHT: 7.2 pounds • **STOCK:** Magpul CTR
SIGHTS: YHM QDS **ACTION:** Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Matte black
CAPACITY: 30+1 **MSRP:** $2,295-$2,365



YHM SLR SMOOTH

CALIBER: 5.56mm, 6.8 SPC, 300 BLK
BARREL: 16 inches • **WEIGHT:** 6.9 pounds • **STOCK:** Collapsible
SIGHTS: YHM QDS • **ACTION:** Semi-auto • **FINISH:** Matte black
CAPACITY: 30+1 • **MSRP:** $1,700-$1,781

YHM HUNT READY SERIES HRC-160 & HRC-200



CALIBER: 5.56mm, 6.8 SPC,
300 BLK • **BARREL:** 16 or 20 inches
WEIGHT: 9.11 pounds • **STOCK:** Collapsible
SIGHTS: Bushnell 3-9x40mm • **ACTION:** Semi-auto
FINISH: Matte black or Realtree AP
CAPACITY: 5+1 • **MSRP:** $1,531-$1,605

LIST OF MANUFACTURERS

ALEXANDER ARMS
alexanderarms.com; 540-639-8356

ARMALITE
armalite.com; 800-336-0184

BARRETT FIREARMS
barrett.net; 615-896-2938

BERETTA
beretta.com

BLACK RAIN ORDNANCE
blackrainordnance.com;
888-836-2620

BRAVO COMPANY USA
bravocompanyusa.com;
877-272-8626

BUSHMASTER
bushmaster.com; 800-883-6229

COLT
colt.com; 800-962-2658

DANIEL DEFENSE
danieldefense.com; 866-554-4867

DARK STORM INDUSTRIES
dark-storm.com; 800-963-7700

DEL-TON
del-ton.com; 910-645-2172

DIAMONDBACK FIREARMS
diamondbackfirearms.com;
877-997-6774

DPMS PANTHER ARMS
dpmsinc.com; 800-578-3767

DRD TACTICAL
drdtactical.com

FNH USA
fnhusa.com; 703-288-3500

HECKLER & KOCH
hk-usa.com; 706-568-1906

IWI US
iwi.us; 717-695-2081

LEWIS MACHINE & TOOL
lmtdefense.com; 309-732-9527

LWRC INTERNATIONAL
lwrci.com; 410-901-1348

MOSSBERG
mossberg.com; 203-230-5300

PATRIOT ORDNANCE FACTORY
pof-usa.com; 877-561-9572

REMINGTON
remington.com; 800-243-9700

ROCK ISLAND ARMORY
us.armscor.com; 775-537-1444

ROCK RIVER ARMS
rockriverarms.com;
866-980-7625

RUGER
ruger.com

SEEKINS PRECISION
seekinsprecision.com; 208-743-3400

SIG SAUER
sigsauer.com; 603-772-2302

SMITH & WESSON
smith-wesson.com; 800-331-0852

STAG ARMS
stagarms.com; 860-229-9994

WILSON COMBAT
wilsoncombat.com; 800-955-4856

WINDHAM WEAPONRY
windhamweaponry.com;
855-808-1888

YANKEE HILL MACHINE
yhm.net; 877-892-6533

CUTTING EDGE AR AMMO

As the popularity of the AR continues to grow to meteoric levels, it seems like everyone already has one and is now buying their second or third rifle. Of course, thanks to Eugene Stoner's ingenious design and the modular nature of the AR, you don't need to buy a whole second rifle in order to change calibers and go from a varmint gun to a home-defense gun, to a medium-sized or big-game gun. Indeed, being able to shoot more than one cartridge through essentially the same rifle is one of the main reasons people buy new upper receivers and new barrels all the time.

This modularity has led to the creation of various specially designed calibers for the AR platform, and we're not just talking about wildcats, either. Many mainstream manufacturers have worked with hunters and members of the special operations community to develop new and more powerful loadings for the AR. Of course, the .223 Remington/5.56mm NATO still remains king, but that doesn't mean this venerable cartridge has not seen some significant improvements in recent years. Here are some of the latest loadings for your AR-platform rifle. ***—Jorge Amselle***

AGUILA AMMUNITION

For economical, high-quality, new-manufactured range ammo, Aguila Ammunition is really hard to beat. The company also excels in making new and innovative ammunition, including its .22 Colibri rounds and short shotgun minishells. The company uses all-new components and non-corrosive primers for reliable feeding and solid performance. For ARs, the company offers three loadings: a 62-grain 5.56mm NATO FMJ, a 55-grain .223 Remington FMJ and a 150-grain 7.62mm NATO FMJ.(aguilaammo.com; 888-452-4019)

BARNES BULLETS

Barnes is well known to reloaders for its extremely high-quality bullets, but the company also manufactures some of the best defensive and hunting ammunition available and has recently expanded its offerings. Combining its excellent bullets with precision loading, Barnes is offering several new cartridge options for precision shooting. Barnes' Precision Match ammunition, loaded with a match-grade, open-tip, boat-tail bullet, is designed for extreme accuracy at long distances with a very low standard deviation. New 69- and 85-grain 5.56mm loads are available. For those who need more power, there are new 175-grain .308, 220-grain .300 WM and 300-grain .338 Lapua loads.

Barnes has not left out competition shooters, and its new RangeAR is designed for target, training and competition as a low-cost option that delivers higher velocities. The lead-free bullets are made using a zinc core surrounded by a copper jacket with an open-tip, flat-base design. These loads are designed to perform well in high-twist-rate barrels of any length, and their construction will not damage steel targets. New loads include a 52-grain 5.56mm as well as a 95-grain 300 BLK.

Hunters have new loadings as well in the VOR-TX line, which features an expanding solid-copper bullet ideal for medium-sized game. This round offers minimal recoil yet expands to twice its diameter with four petals almost immediately on contact and penetrates fully with 100-percent weight retention. This line includes 62- and 70-grain 5.56mm loads and a 120-grain 300 BLK. Most of the company's loadings also include QR codes that provide shooters with



Aguila 62-grain 5.56mm FMJ



Barnes Precision Match



Black Hills 70-grain 5.56mm GMX



Federal Premium Fusion MSR

bullet-drop tables specific to each load. (barnesbullets.com; 800-574-9200)

BLACK HILLS

Black Hills Ammunition has several new loadings for ARs, including a 5.56mm with the 70-grain Hornady GMX, which is specifically designed to perform well against barriers. Most barriers, especially auto glass, will severely affect a bullet's performance. The GMX bullet is designed for law enforcement to minimize the effect of barriers and deliver results on target. It performs equally well for hunters who need a bullet that expands reliably. It performs best in faster 1-in-7- and 1-in-8-inch-twist barrels with 17 to 22 inches of penetration in gelatin and 100-percent expansion and weight retention. (black-hills.com; 605-348-5150)

FEDERAL PREMIUM

The newest ammunition from Federal is a line specifically designed for ARs and similar rifles. The Fusion MSR (Modern Sporting Rifle) ammunition has been engineered to perform well in scenarios from hunting to home defense in rifles with 16-inch barrels (62-grain .223) as well as in those with 20-inch barrels (150-grain .308). A 115-grain 6.8 SPC loading is also available, and all bullets feature a skived bullet tip for consistent long-range expansion, a fused jacket and core, and a boat-tail design for improved accuracy and velocity. (federalpremium.com; 800-379-1732)

GORILLA AMMUNITION

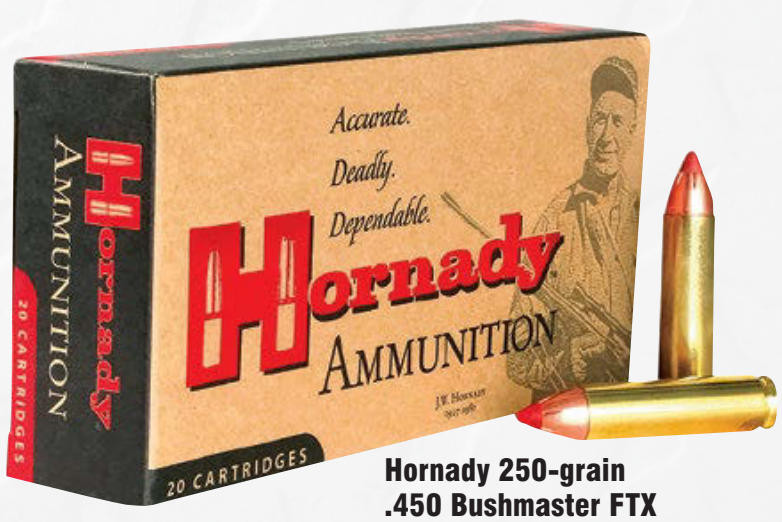
Gorilla Ammunition is committed to manufacturing high-quality, hand-inspected ammo to consumers, and for AR fans it offers several different loadings in .223 Remington, 300 Blackout and .308 Winchester. Subsonic 300 BLK ammo hits hard enough to tackle medium-sized game, including deer and feral hogs. One Gorilla load that is especially well suited for this role is its subsonic 300 Blackout load with a 220-grain Sierra MatchKing bullet. The company's website also features a video showing how silent it can be when suppressed. It should be noted that subsonic ammunition creates less pressure and may not run reliably in some semi-autos that are not suppressed. Of course, Gorilla also sells a supersonic 300 Blackout load with a 125-grain Sierra MatchKing. (gorillaammunition.com; 772-766-5805)

HORNADY

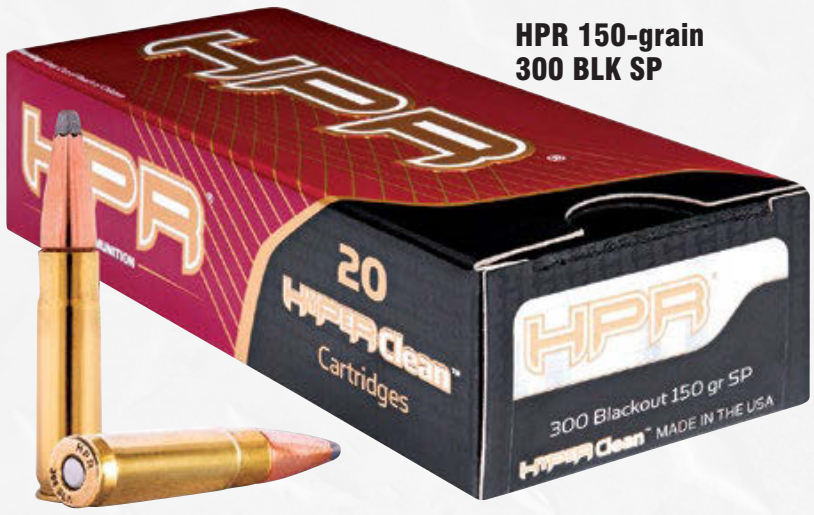
Hornady manufactures some great ammunition for the AR, and it also specializes in producing high-quality AR ammo that you don't often see elsewhere. The company's 123-grain 6.5 Grendel SST uses a "Super Shock Tip" designed for maximum terminal performance, penetration and expansion. It is effective against medium-sized game like whitetail deer. This round features a polymer tip and boat-tail design to increase its ballistic coefficient, and its Interlock Ring keeps the jacket and core together for improved weight retention. Another interesting hunting round for the AR is Hornady's 250-grain .450 FTX, also known as the "Thumper." This round was designed for big-game hunting at intermediate ranges, and it represents a radical departure for the AR. While it requires a new upper and magazine, this round is suitable for anything up to large bears. The FTX bullet features Hornady's Flex Tip technology



Gorilla Ammunition 220-grain 300 BLK MatchKing



Hornady 250-grain .450 Bushmaster FTX



HPR 150-grain 300 BLK SP



Liberty 55-grain .223 Silverado

with a soft polymer tip that ensures reliable expansion and a specially engineered heavy jacket at the rear of the bullet. (hornady.com; 800-338-3220)

HPR AMMO

The 300 Blackout was developed initially for military special operations units looking for a harder-hitting cartridge that could be more easily suppressed than the 5.56mm NATO but still fit and function in a standard AR with minimal alteration. This cartridge has succeeded extremely well and only requires a barrel change. It is available in subsonic and supersonic varieties and has also found favor among hunters. HPR's new 150-grain 300 Blackout SP (Soft Point) and 110-grain 300 Blackout TAC-TX are designed with HyperClean technology and offer excellent expansion. And HPR's new 110-grain 300 Blackout FMJ is designed for range use and training. This is consistent, high-quality, sub-MOA ammunition made entirely in the U.S. (hprammo.com; 928-468-0223)

LIBERTY AMMUNITION

Liberty's lead-free, monolithic, deep-cavity-fragmenting Silverado rifle rounds are loaded with 55-grain bullets that blast apart into nine pieces for maximum damage on impact. The projectile is loaded on a cartridge with stopping power of over 1,100 foot-pounds of energy with a velocity greater than 3,000 fps for terminal effects on medium to large game using a nickel and copper blend. And for other applications, the rounds will penetrate heavy cloth, wallboard, oblique glass and car doors without fragmenting. (libertyammunition.com; 888-506-0576)

RED ARMY STANDARD

One of the great benefits of ARs chambered in 7.62x39mm is the plentiful and inexpensive nature of this cartridge (as well as its suitable use for hunting larger game where the .223 Remington is not permitted). Modified magazines are required for some ARs, while others will accommodate AK magazines, but if you don't want to use surplus ammunition of dubious provenance, Century Arms is importing affordable, newly manufactured, high-quality 7.62x39mm ammo from Europe under the Red Army Standard banner. Its 123-grain FMJ ammunition is made to American specifications featuring lead-core bullets and non-corrosive primers, which makes cleaning easier and helps prevent rust or corrosion. The brass cases are Boxer primed for reliability. (redarmystandard.com)

REMINGTON

Remington produces plenty of ammunition in .223, but one of its other loadings for the AR is the 6.8 SPC. Like many other non-5.56mm cartridges, this too was originally designed for the military special operations community looking for an intermediate cartridge between the 5.56mm and 7.62mm NATO. Based on a modified .30 Remington case, this cartridge also



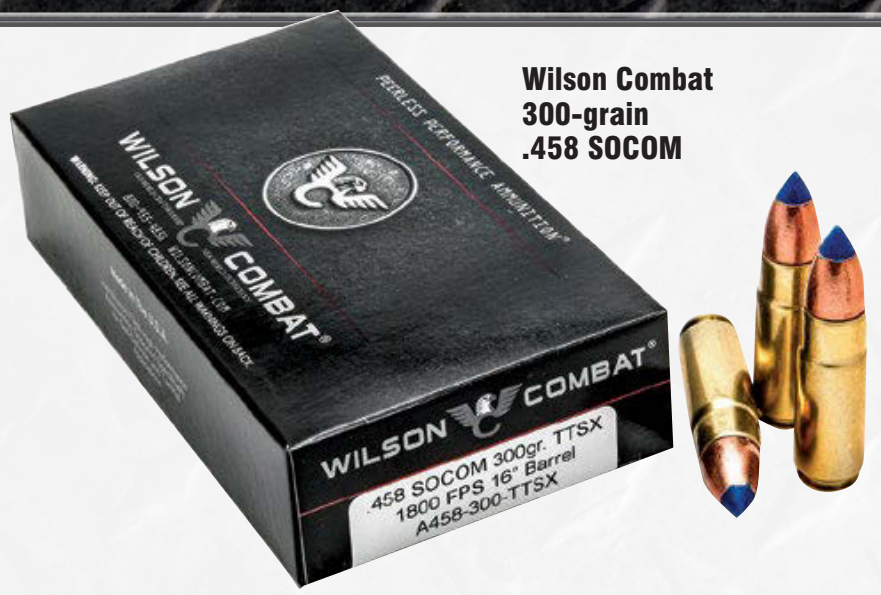
Red Army Standard 123-grain 7.62x39mm FMJ



Remington 115-grain 6.8 SPC MatchKing



Sig Sauer Elite Performance 300 BLK MatchKing OTM



Wilson Combat 300-grain .458 SOCOM



Winchester 55-grain .223 Varmint-X

sought to combine the accuracy of a 6.5mm bullet with the terminal ballistics of a 7mm bullet. This ammunition outperforms the 7.62x39mm and is highly effective out to 500 yards. Several loads are available, but it's hard to beat Remington's 115-grain match hollow-point load. (remington.com; 800-243-9700)

SIG SAUER

Sig Sauer is already renowned for manufacturing some of the best pistols and rifles available anywhere, but the company recently began manufacturing ammunition to the same high quality and demanding standards. To date, the only rifle ammunition Sig Sauer is offering is its new 220-grain subsonic and 125-grain supersonic 300 BLK ammo. Both cartridges are loaded with Sierra MatchKing Open-Tip Match (OTM) bullets with a proprietary lead alloy core and match-grade brass for superior performance and accuracy. Despite the larger bullet diameter, the case diameter and overall length of the 300 BLK remains the same as the 5.56mm's, so a full 30 rounds will fit in a standard AR magazine. (sigsauer.com; 603-610-3000)

WILSON COMBAT

Wilson Combat has a great reputation for building outstanding firearms with incredible attention to detail. But a firearm is only as good as the ammunition it fires. This led the company to start producing its own ammunition, including a line specifically for ARs that is manufactured to the same exacting standards as Wilson's guns. Wilson Combat uses only the best components for optimal performance, including low-flash powders to preserve night vision, improved crimping and polishing for better reliability, pressure tailored to your barrel length and hand inspection. The company currently offers .223 Remington. 6.8 SPC, 300 BLK, .308 Winchester and .458 SOCOM ammo as well as its proprietary 7.62x40mm WT (Wilson Tactical), which is based on the original 7.62x40mm wildcat cartridge. (wilsoncombat.com; 800-955-4856)

WINCHESTER

Winchester Ammunition has expanded its well-regarded PDX1 Defender line to include several new offerings in .223 Remington, such as 60- and 77-grain loads, as well as a 120-grain .308 Winchester load and a 120-grain 7.62x39mm. The PDX1 Defender hollow point is specifically designed for semi-autos and features a proprietary bonding process to retain maximum weight while defeating barriers.

Hunters can select from two new Varmint-X .223 loadings with 40- and 55-grain bullets. This bullet features a polymer tip for flat shooting and accurate performance at distance with an alloy jacket and a rapidly fragmenting lead core. It is ideal for game up to and including bobcats and coyotes. (winchester.com)

FILL 'ER UP!

The rhetoric and politics of high-capacity—we call them "full-" or "standard-" capacity—magazines has gone mainstream and now embodies a cornerstone of the war being waged on Second Amendment rights. In recent months, the anti-gun opponents realized that an all-out war on firearms faced incredible odds, but by creating a false perception about so-called "assault rifles" and chipping away at ownership via laws like those against full-capacity magazines, they've gained a foothold.



New York, Connecticut and Colorado have joined states like Massachusetts, California, New Jersey and others with some of the nation's strictest firearm laws on the books. Most include a cap on how many rounds of ammo you can have in your firearm's magazine.

Of course, there's randomness in the laws, since emotion rather than constitutional rights shoved the legislation in the public limelight.

As the political battles play out across the country, you can stand tall knowing there are legitimate reasons to own full-capacity magazines. First and foremost is your right in the Second Amendment. Read it carefully and you'll see that it has little to do with hunting or recreational shooting and everything to do with government tyranny.

Full-capacity magazines would provide you personal safety in times of social unrest or even civil war. And don't overlook recreation. Regardless of what anti-gun media and politicians want you to think, there are a handful of hunting pursuits where quick access to extra cartridges comes in handy. *—Mark Kayser*

NEW STOCK MARKET

Stock picks depend not on who you know, but how you're built. Each operator's shoulder pocket and cheekweld is slightly different, and though the fixed A2-style and the M4 collapsible stocks are good one-size-fits-all solutions, you have options. Think of AR stocks as falling into two camps. The first are the collapsible, compact types that are suited for CQB or home defense, and the second camp is the nearly infinitely adjustable precision stocks for long-range work. Any of these stock options will help maximize your AR's performance, whether it's for fun work in the hunting fields or for self-defense duty. ***—ARCR Staff Report***



ATI AR-15 TactLite

ADAPTIVE TACTICAL EX PERFORMANCE ADJUSTABLE AR/M4 STOCK

Made with impact-resistant polymer, the Adaptive Tactical EX Performance AR/M4 Stock is durable and tough. Featuring an easy-to-reach rapid-adjust lever, the length of pull is customizable for shooters of different statures. An integrated QD swivel attachment and a molded-in, rust-proof, standard sling swivel attachment are included. (208-442-8000; adaptivetactical.com)

ATI AR-15 TACTLITE

The TactLite six-position stock from ATI comes with a buffer tube assembly for a perfect fit on commercial- or mil-spec-sized AR-15 rifles. Weighing only 5.7 ounces, the TactLite stock is made of glass-reinforced polymer with a Scorpion recoil pad and a dual-sided QD attachment point. The TactLite stock has six locking positions. (atigunstocks.com; 800-925-2522)

BLACKHAWK KNOXX

The adjustable Knoxx replacement buttstock is constructed of impact-resistant, reinforced polymer and offers a precision fit with military-style tubes with 1.146-inch diameters. The Knoxx is designed for a comfortable cheekweld as well as quick and smooth length adjustments. Ambidextrous sling mounting locations are preinstalled with a 1-inch QD sling swivel. Available colors include black, desert tan and olive drab. (blackhawk.com; 800-379-1732)

BOYDS' AR HARDWOOD

Wood on an AR is possible thanks to Boyd's AR-15/ M16 rifle stocks. Made of multi-colored, laminated hardwood, the stock not only looks distinct, but it is tough and functional, and comes with a rubber recoil pad and swivel stud installed. These laminate stocks work with A2-type buffer tubes. (boydsgunstocks.com; 605-996-5011)

BRAVO COMPANY BCMGUNFIGHTER

The BCMGUNFIGHTER stock offers a lightweight, snag-free design that easily installs on your AR-15 rifle or carbine. Made of rugged polymer, the stock features a rubber recoil pad and two different types of ambidextrous sling mounting options, including QD swivel sockets. The patented latch provides users with strength when dropped or when mortaring malfunction clearance drills. The buttstock is available in black, Flat Dark Earth, foliage green and wolf gray. (bravocompanyusa.com; 877-272-8626)

COMMAND ARMS CBS

The CBS is a six-position stock with an ambidextrous, watertight side compartment that stows four CR123 batteries. Made of durable polymer with a rubber recoil pad, the CBS fits all AR-15 platforms. Two metal, quick-release sling mounting points plus standard sling mounts provide quick sling attachment and release. Black, green and khaki finishes are available. Side Picatinny rails

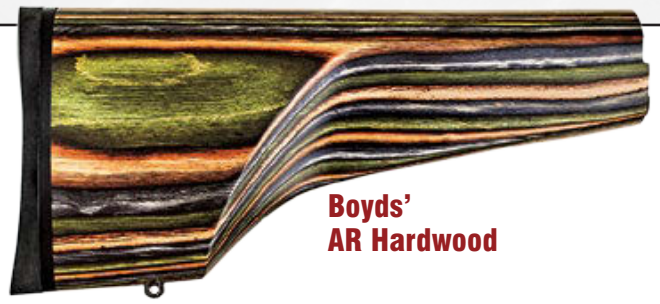


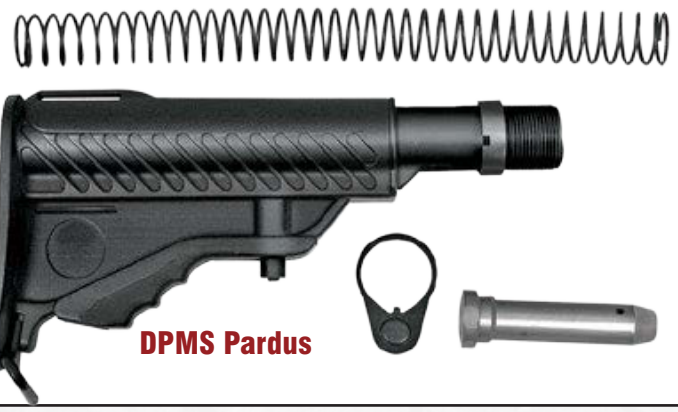
Adaptive Tactical EX Performance Adjustable AR/M4 Stock

Bravo Company BCMGUNFIGHTER

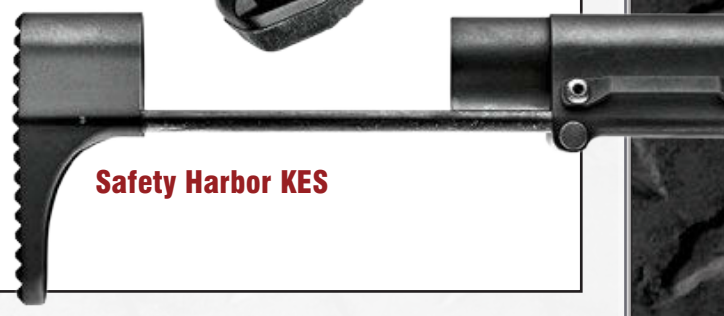
BlackHawk Knoxx


Command Arms CBS


Boyds' AR Hardwood


DPMS Pardus


Magpul MOE SL


Safety Harbor KES

can be used to attach an adjustable cheekpiece (ACP) or magazine holder (MPS). (commandarms.com)

DPMS PARDUS

Combining light weight with great handling characteristics, DPMS' Pardus collapsible AR stock is constructed of fiber-reinforced Zytel polymer. Its buttplate is curved and has a saw-tooth texture, and a Monte Carlo-style cheekrest rounds out the package. Slings can be attached through four integrated slots. The length of pull can be adjusted via a latch with built-in finger grooves. (800-578-3767; dpmsinc.com)

LUTH-AR SKULLATON MBA-2

The minimalist "Skullaton" MBA-2 fixed stock fits both .223 and .308 AR-style rifles with A2 or A1 buttstocks. Installation is fast and simple. Made of superstrong glass-filled nylon, the MBA-2 has a sleek look, is ergonomic and weighs only 11.2 ounces. Its overall length is 10.37 inches. (luth-ar.com; 763-263-0166)

MAGPUL MOE SL

The MOE SL (Slim Line) stock is a drop-in replacement for AR-15/M4 carbines with mil-spec-sized receiver extension tubes. The sloping cheekweld combines with a slim profile for operator comfort. Dual side-release latches provide easy adjustment while contributing to the stock's anti-snag exterior. Black, Flat Dark Earth, stealth gray and olive-drab green finishes are available. (magpul.com; 877-462-4785)

SAFETY HARBOR KES

The KES (Kompact Entry Stock) system is a pull-out stock built to fit on all standard-spec AR-15/M16 lowers. The length of pull expands to 13.5 inches in seconds and allows for easy sling mounting on either the left or right side of the gun. When collapsed, the KES does not interfere with the operation of the weapon. The Kompact Entry Stock kit consists of the stock assembly, a buffer, carrier and spring. (safetyharborfirearms.com; 727-726-2500)

TAPCO INTRAFUSE AR T6

The Intrafuse AR T6 is not just another mil-spec-style stock. This six-position stock is made of military-grade composite to conform easily to a shooter's stature as well as allow for a more compact fit. The latch supports are reinforced, and the buttplate is thicker for a more solid firing platform. The stock is a complete kit that includes the stock, extension tube, buffer with spring, a locking plate, castle nut and sling swivel. (tapco.com; 800-554-1445)


Luth-AR Skullaton MBA-2


Tapco Intrafuse AR T6


Thordsen Customs FRS-15

THORDSEN CUSTOMS FRS-15

The FRS-15 eliminates the pistol grip and adjustable stock on an AR-15 for part of some state and local compliance laws. The enhanced kit (shown) includes the FRS-15 stock, with a glass-filled nylon body and a rubber buttpad for recoil control and comfort, as well as a buffer tube cover for a more comfortable cheekweld. Also included in this kit are quick-detach sling sockets, an endplate and mounting hardware. (thordsencustoms.com; 650-588-3700)

ON TARGET OPTICS & IRONS

A generation ago, an optic on a battle rifle was uncommon. As optic technology evolved to produce rugged, dependable and consistent glass, the AR platform has benefited tremendously. This has helped make an AR in either a carbine or rifle configuration more effective up close through the use of red dots and reflex sights. With compact, low-power scopes, close- to mid-range shooting is fast and accurate. At distance, optics can help squeeze out all of your AR's performance potential.

In the event of optic failure, backup iron sights (BUIS) offer a critical redundancy in the AR platform. Some BUIS can be deployed instantly. With a press of a button, the sights flip up and lock into place, allowing an operator to continue with the mission and stay in the fight. The following is a collection of the latest sighting systems that should find you and your rifle having more fun peppering bullseyes at CQB range and far beyond.

— ARCR Staff Report

OPTICS & MOUNTS

AIMPOINT MICRO T-2

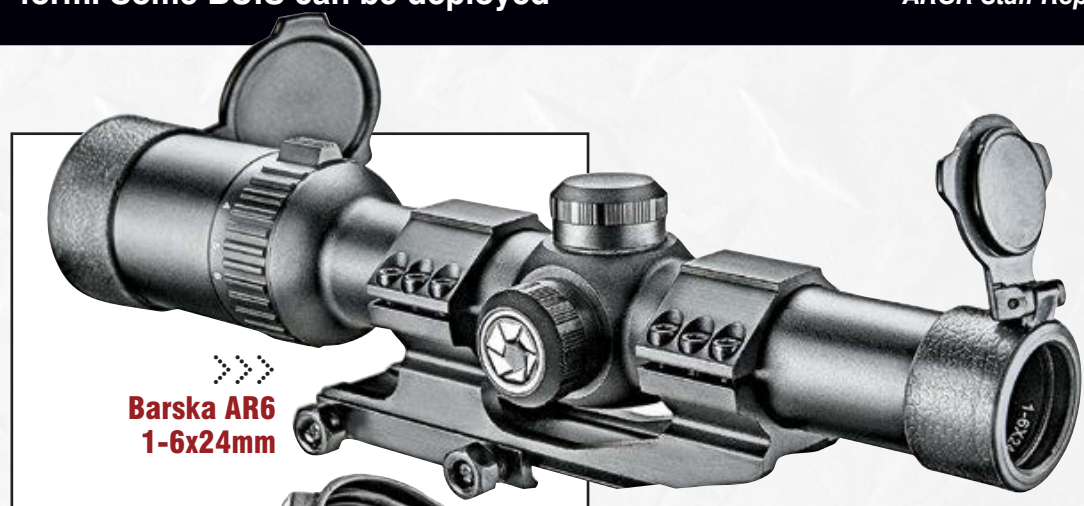
The Micro T-2 red-dot sight features a new housing that allows for the use of flip covers and features beefed-up turret protection and internal electronic components. The reticle is a 2-MOA red dot with a variety of illumination settings: four settings for night vision and eight daylight settings. At only 3.7 ounces, it is super lightweight. It is also compatible with night-vision and magnifying devices. (aimpoint.com; 877-246-7646)

ARMASIGHT Q14 TIMM 336 (60HZ)

The Q14 TIMM 336 from Armasight is a compact, long-wave infrared multi-functional thermal imaging monocular (LIMTIM). The unit uses digital contrast correction to optimize the image even where a variety of contrast levels occur, depending on scene temperature. The Q14 TIMM 336 is compatible with both visible and infrared laser pointers and can be mounted to a weapon or helmet as needed. (armasight.com; 888-959-2259)

BARSKA AR6 1-6x24mm

Developed for short- to mid-range shooting, the AR6 1-6x24mm riflescope features a 30mm tube design and fully coated optics. This provides high light transmission and a bright, crisp image. Barska's 30/30 duplex-style reticle rounds out the package and illuminates in either red or green. It is powered by one CR2032 battery, and flip-up lens caps and a cantilever mount are included. (barska.com; 888-666-6769)



Barska AR6 1-6x24mm



Aimpoint Micro T-2



Armasight Q14 TIMM 336

BURRIS AR-332 TACTICAL KIT

Burris is offering AR Tactical Kits that include a quality prism sight and either a secondary red-dot sight or an AR Tripler, plus mounts, all packaged in a rugged carry case. The AR-332 Tactical Kit features a Burris AR-332 featuring 3X magnification and the Ballistic CQ reticle. An Anti-Reflection Device reduces reflection and glare. The included FastFire II red dot reflex sight provides a 4-MOA dot with an automatic brightness sensor that adjusts to any lighting condition. It can be positioned on top of the AR-332 for fast target acquisitions and close-range engagements. (burrisoptics.com; 970-356-1670)



Burris AR-332 Tactical Kit



Bushnell First Strike HiRise



Bushnell TRS -25 HiRise

BUSHNELL FIRST STRIKE HIRISE

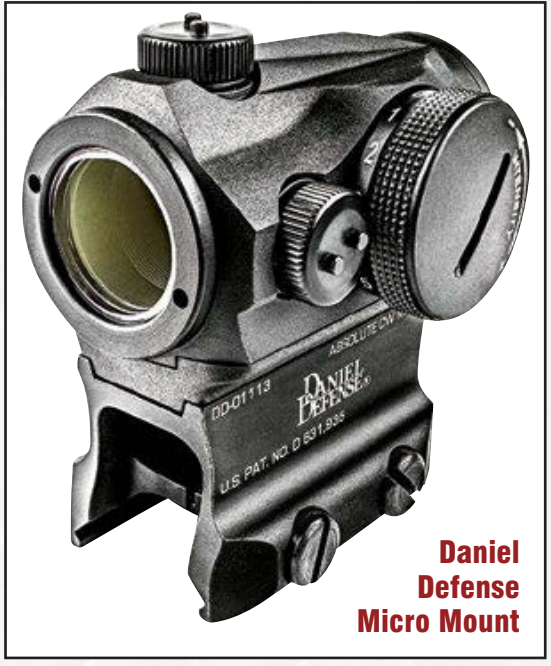
Featuring a 5-MOA dot reticle with an automatic brightness adjustment that adjusts illumination based on variable light conditions, the Bushnell First Strike HiRise reflex sight delivers when it counts. An included riser block elevates the sight to proper eye level when mounted on a flattop AR carbine or rifle. The integrated base allows the optic to be quickly mounted on a Weaver-style base or Picatinny rail. Included is a protective hood that covers the sight. (bushnell.com; 800-423-3537)

BUSHNELL TRS -25 HIRISE

Designed to allow proper eye alignment with an AR, the TRS-25 HiRise from Bushnell comes with a riser block that positions the TRS-25 at the optimal height when mounted on an AR-15 flattop rifle. It features a 3-MOA red dot with 11 brightness settings and multi-coated optics to enhance light transmission. It is waterproof, fogproof and shockproof, and an included one-piece rubber cover protects both lenses. (bushnell.com; 800-423-3537)

DANIEL DEFENSE MICRO MOUNT

Made of 6061-T6 aluminum with a hard-coat anodized finish, the Micro Mount gives users a rock-solid mount at the correct height for their Aimpoint Micro sights. Two mounting options allow users to set up this mount for an absolute co-witness (1.5 ounces) or include the magnesium spacer (1.8 ounces) for a lower-third co-witness with iron sights. Daniel Defense rounds and dehorns all of the sharp edges on the Micro Mount so it's totally snag-free. (danieldefense.com; 866-554-4867)



Daniel Defense Micro Mount



ELCAN SpecterTR

Dead Ringer Widow Maker

DEAD RINGER WIDOW MAKER

The 1.5-6x32mm Widow Maker scope from Dead Ringer features a second-focal-plane, glass-etched reticle, a fast-focus ocular and fully multi-coated lenses. The 8.9-inch-long scope has lockable turrets that offer 0.5-MOA click adjustments. Finally, the reticle is illuminated for superior sighting in a variety of lighting conditions. (deadringerhunting.com; 585-355-4685)

ELCAN SPECTERTR

The SpecterTR is very unique in the world of rifle optics, as it offers three field-of-view options in one sight, making it effective in close-range situations, mid-range scenarios and for long-range shooting. A switch on the side of the SpecterTR unit allows an operator to go from any of the three fields of view instantly. (armament.com)

EOTECH MODEL 518

The 518 Holographic Weapon Sight (HWS) features a quick-release base, side-button functionality and is powered by commonly found AA batteries. The unit is compatible with the EOTech's magnifier and the company's proprietary laser battery caps. The 518 weighs 13.3 ounces and is 5.5 inches in length. (eotech-inc.com; 888-368-4656)

KAHLES K16I

The K16i is a fast-targeting 1-6x24mm compact scope with a huge field of view. At 1X power, the field of view is 127 feet, and at 100 yards and 6X power the field of view is 20.1 feet. The K16i uses a second-focal-plane reticle, so it does not enlarge as the power is turned up. Four reticle styles are available. The SI 1 and SM 1 reticles offer unobstructed views above the horizontal strata, and they are equipped with an illuminated donut and dot for close-up work. The vertical strata has graduated tick marks for more precise elevated aiming marks. (kahles.at; 866-606-8779)

LEUPOLD D-EVO

The unique 6x20mm D-EVO (Dual-Enhanced View Optic) is Z-shaped to allow the unit to be paired and mounted behind a reflex, holographic or red-dot sight without obstructing the view. In the field, shooters can quickly shift their focus from the 1X view of the red-dot sight to the 6X precision optic of the D-EVO. (leupold.com; 800-563-7653)

NCSTAR DCH GEN 2 CARRY HANDLE & DOT SIGHT

This unit combines the DCH Gen 2 Carry Handle with a dot sight. The rear of the carry handle has a short Picatinny rail for mounting other accessories like lights or lasers. Weighing 9.1 ounces, the 6.9-inch handle attaches to any flattop receiver via quick-release levers. (ncstar.com; 866-627-8278)

NIGHTFORCE OPTICS 4-16x42mm F1 ATACR

The 4-16x42mm F1 ATACR (Advanced Tactical Riflescope) offers extreme optical quality, clarity and performance in a compact package that is just 12.6 inches long. The first-focal-plane reticle uses Digillum illumination, and four reticle options are offered: Horus H59, Horus TReMor3, MIL-R F1 and MOAR F1. The scope's eyepiece uses an integrated Power Throw Lever for super-fast magnification changes. (nightforceoptics.com; 208-476-9814)



EOTech Model 518



Kahles K16i



NcSTAR DCH Gen 2 Carry Handle & Dot Sight



Leupold D-EVO



Nightforce Optics 4-16x42mm F1 ATACR



Nikon P-308



NiteSite Viper



Sightmark Pinnacle 1-6x24mm AAC



Trijicon RMR



Spuhr ISMS Scope Mount



UTG 1-8x28mm CQB/MRC Scope



Weaver KASPA Tactical 1.5-6x32mm

NIKON P-308

One of the most trusted names in sport optics is still pumping out great glass at affordable prices. The new P-308 riflescope provides shooters with everything they need to hit their target, including 4-12X magnification, a 40mm objective, fully multicoated lenses to ensure a clear view and Nikon's popular BDC 800 reticle—a reticle specifically engineered for the .308 Winchester/7.62x51mm NATO round with 168-grain HBT Match bullet at 2,680 fps. (nikonsportoptics.com; 800-645-6687)

NITESITE VIPER

The Viper is a short-range night-vision system designed to be affordable and reliable. The Viper uses an integral 3.4-inch LCD screen and infrared illumination different than traditional light amplification technologies to deliver crisp, ultra-clear night vision, regardless of ambient light conditions. It allows target identification up to 110 yards away while a video jack makes it easy to record the view. (nitesite.com)

SIGHTMARK PINNACLE 1-6x24mm AAC

The Pinnacle 1-6x24mm AAC first-focal-plane riflescope from Sightmark features a red/green-illuminated CDC-300 reticle calibrated for 300 BLK ammunition. The rugged Pinnacle can take 800 Gs of recoil force, so you know it is one tough customer. The unit's one CR2032 battery will run the scope's reticle for 30 to 1,000 hours depending on the illumination setting. (sightmark.com; 817-225-0310)

SPUHR ISMS SCOPE MOUNT

The ISMS (Ideal Scope Mounting System) design provides a solid Picatinny-style mounting platform for accessories and clear visibility of the turrets. This mount features a 10-degree leveling wedge, four numbered and indexed Torx-head screws, a built-in level to indicate any cant and seven to eight mounting surfaces for accessories. It is constructed from a single piece of solid billet 7075-T651 aluminum. (spuhr.biz)

TRIJICON MRO

Trijicon MRO (Miniature Rifle Optic) is a sealed miniature reflex sight intended for use on rifles, carbines and shotguns to provide fast target acquisition. The large aperture and tapered light path maximizes the viewing area and allows for better situational awareness and fast target engagement. Other features include ambidextrous brightness controls, sub-flush adjusters, advanced lens coatings and a waterproof 7075-T6 housing. (trijicon.com; 800-338-0563)

TRIJICON RMR

The forged aluminum Trijicon RMR (Ruggedized Miniature Reflex) is now available with a 1-MOA dot reticle with eight brightness settings. The sight can automatically adjust to light conditions or be manually adjusted via side buttons. The Trijicon RMR is powered by one CR2032 battery. (trijicon.com; 800-338-0563)

UTG 1-8x28MM CQB/MRC SCOPE

Have the need for a scope to play multiple range roles? The UTG 1-8x28mm CQB/MRC scope offers 1X power for close encounters and up to 8X magnification for distance. Built on a 30mm tube, the scope is compact and lightweight. The illuminated, glass-etched, circle-dot reticle offers 36 different color choices and adjustable brightness settings. (leapers.com; 734-542-1500)

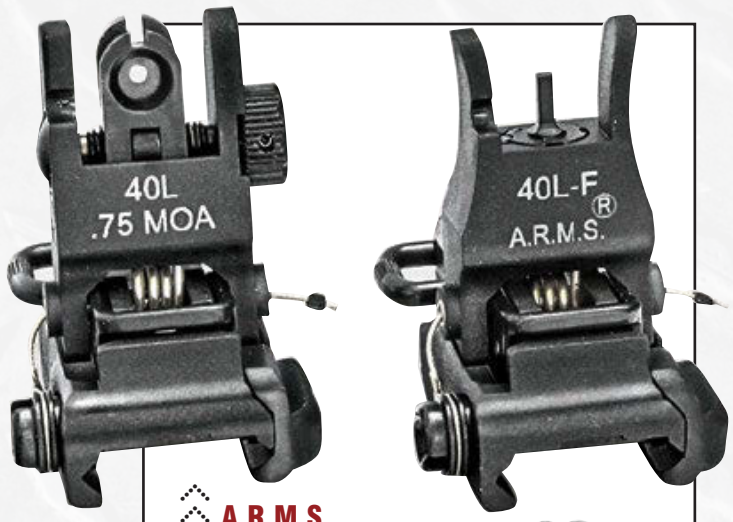
WEAVER KASPA TACTICAL

The KASPA 1.5-6x32mm scope features a one-piece tube, 0.25-MOA click adjustments at 100 yards and fully multicoated lenses. The illuminated Tactical Ballistic-X (TBX) glass-etched reticle is powered by one CR2032 battery. (weaveroptics.com; 800-379-1732)

BACKUP IRON SIGHTS

A.R.M.S. #40 L-F/#40 L COMBO

This front and rear sight pair offers a low profile in the folded position. The sights are spring loaded and held in place by a quick-release lever that also ensures the sights are not accidentally deployed. These sights lean slightly to the rear, so they fold back in the correct position if accidentally dropped. The rear sight has dual apertures for different engagement distances. (armsmounts.com; 508-584-7816)



A.R.M.S. #40 L-F/#40 L Combo

AMERICAN TACTICAL FLIP UP COMBO

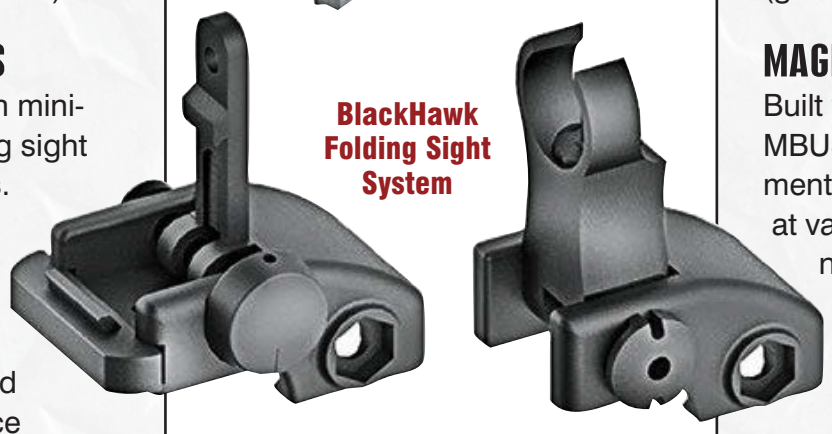
The Flip Up Combo from American Tactical (AT) is an all-metal sight set for use on AR rifles. The rear sight has two apertures and is fully adjustable. The front sight of the system has an adjustable post. AT offers sets for ARs with flattop uppers and railed gas blocks as well as ARs with free-floating rails on the same plane as the upper receiver. (americantactical.us; 800-290-0065)



AT Flip-Up Combo

BLACKHAWK FOLDING SIGHTS

Delivering top performance with minimal bulk, the BlackHawk folding sight system delivers when it matters. With a push of a button, the AR-15 folding rear sight springs up when needed. The front sight, which has an adjustable center post protected by side wings, springs into place just like the rear. Both are constructed with a polymer base and aluminum posts. (blackhawk.com; 800-379-1732)



BlackHawk Folding Sight System

DIAMONDHEAD D-45 INTEGRATED SIGHTING SYSTEM

The D-45 Integrated Sighting System features 45-degree-offset swing sights. All an operator needs to do is flip out the sights and roll the AR 45 degrees counterclockwise. The rear sight stows under the eyepiece of a scope and features dual apertures with 0.5-MOA adjustments. The front sight accepts all standard A2 front sight posts. (diamondhead-usa.com; 413-739-6970)



Diamondhead D-45 Integrated Sighting System

GG&G 45-DEGREE TRANSITION SIGHTS

Engaging targets at close range is easier with GG&G's 45-Degree Transition Sights. The front and rear combo set are offset at 45 degrees so all an operator does is cant the rifle or carbine to quickly get on target and continue firing. Made of 6061-T6 billet aluminum, the sights install on most Picatinny/Weaver rails. (gggaz.com; 800-380-2540)

GUNTEC USA THIN PROFILE BUIS SIGHT SET

Made of lightweight yet rugged T6 aluminum with steel inserts, the Guntec Thin Profile BUIS Sight Set features a push-button design that locks the sights to prevent them from folding down during use. This sight set installs on any flattop receiver and Picatinny rail and is designed for same-plane rail heights. (guntecusa.com; 480-478-4517)

MAGPUL MBUS PRO LR

Built with all-steel construction, the MBUS Pro LR features elevation adjustments to accurately engage targets at variable distances. The unit offers no-tool adjustments in a compact package. Positive detents keep the MBUS Pro LR at standard AR sight height when deployed and low profile when stowed. (magpul.com; 877-462-4785)

MISSION FIRST TACTICAL BUPSWF

The Back Up Polymer Flip-Up Front Sight with standard iron sight elevation adjustment (BUPSWF) features a shroud that shelters the front post blade from debris and impact damage when not deployed. The sight mounts onto any Picatinny rail and accepts any standard front post blade. The BUPSWF sight is made of reinforced, super-tough polyamide. (missionfirsttactical.com; 267-704-0001)

GG&G 45-Degree Transition Sights



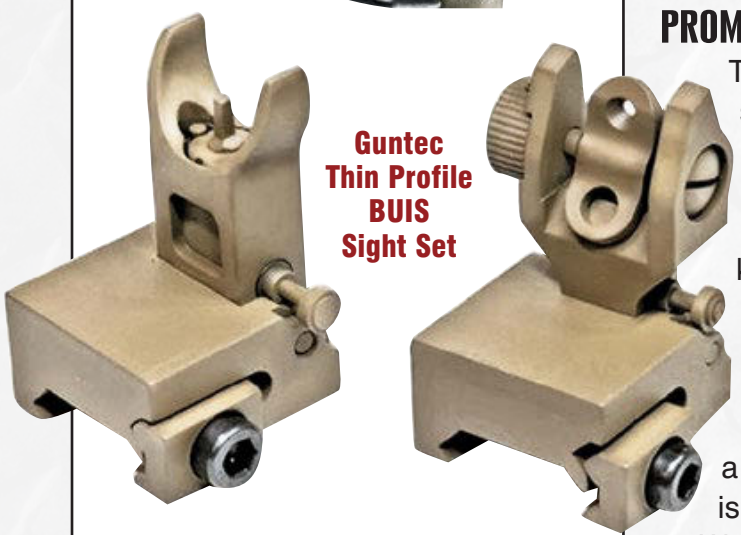
PRI FLIP UP FRONT SIGHT

The PRI Flip Up Front Sight fits 0.75-inch-bore-diameter barrels, is simple to install and bolts on with ease. With the PRI sight folded down, the shadow cast on an optic from a fixed sight is eliminated. The circular hood also speeds up target acquisitions. The base is made of 4140 cast steel, and the post is made of T6-6061 aluminum that has been hardcoat anodized black. (precisionreflex.com; 419-629-2603)

PRI Flip Up Front Sight



Guntec Thin Profile BUIS Sight Set



PROMAG AR-15/M16 FLIP UPS

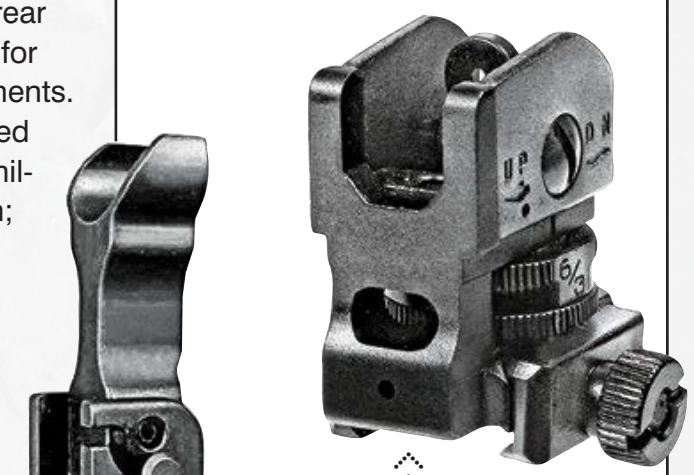
The Promag rear and front sight system features a spring-loaded release for quick access. The rear sight has two apertures and is adjustable via a knob, and the front sight has a wing-protected adjustable post. Made from T6 aircraft-grade aluminum with a black phosphate mil-spec finish, both mount to most Picatinny/Weaver rails. Polymer versions are also available. (promagindustries.com; 800-438-2547)



Promag AR-15/M16 Flip Ups

UTG MIL-SPEC SUB-COMPACT REAR SIGHT

The UTG Mil-Spec Sub-Compact Rear Sight is fully adjustable for windage and elevation. Made of aluminum and steel with a matte black finish, the rear sight offers a spring-loaded detent for positioning and repeatable adjustments. The sight is the exact height required for co-witnessing with a standard mil-spec-style front sight. (leapers.com; 734-542-1500)



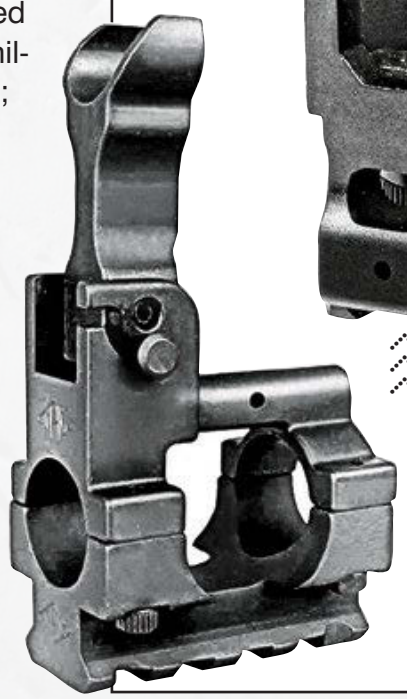
UTG Mil-Spec Sub-Compact Rear Sight



Magpul MBUS Pro LR

YANKEE HILL MACHINE 9835-H FLIP UP FRONT SIGHT

The YHM-9835-H flip-up front sight is convenient as well as versatile with a built-in bottom Picatinny rail. The built-in gas block has a bore diameter of 0.75 inches and is completely made of steel. The unit is available with either a round, hooded front sight guard for fast and accurate sighting or a standard-style front sight guard. (yhm.net; 877-892-6533)



YHM-9835-H Flip-Up Front Sight

Mission First Tactical BUPSWF



SHARP LOOKING LOWERS

Extreme Sharps Bros. lower receivers built for edgy looks and high-end performance!

BY JORGE AMSELLE

The AR of today is virtually unrecognizable from the time I first picked one up at Fort Benning, Georgia. Civilians at least can get ARs that look like something out of a sci-fi movie in any color or pattern and with insanely tricked-out features. However, anyone who is looking to build a custom AR that really stands out from the crowd needs to start with a lower receiver from Sharps Bros.

Founded by John Sharps, the company, based out of Eugene, Oregon, uses the latest in CNC technology and machinery to produce some of the most detailed and interesting-looking AR lower receivers on the market today. The company uses premium-quality 7075-T6 billet aluminum to achieve the unprecedented level of detail in its designs, which include the original that started it all, Sharps' Hellbreaker AR-15 lower receiver.

GIVING 'EM HELL

The Hellbreaker design was inspired by the nose art on the World War II P-40 Warhawk fighter plane. This razor-sharp design, with its bared teeth on the front and sides of the mag well, was meant to inspire fear in the enemy while inspiring unit camaraderie. Another aircraft-inspired design is the Warthog AR-15 lower receiver, which is a tribute to the A-10 Warthog aircraft. The design features an angry charging hog, nostrils flaring and tusks exposed, followed by a row of pointed teeth as part of the distinctly upswept magazine well. Anyone looking to build a dedicated hog-hunting AR could hardly do better.

But the most detailed and distinct of all the Sharps Bros. lower receivers is definitely "The Jack." This nightmare-inducing lower receiver features a highly detailed human skull design complete with molars and incisors as well as an open nasal cavity at the front. Missing the bottom part of the jaw, the rear of the magazine well arches upwards at a high angle to meet the front of the triggerguard.

Of course, there are cleaner designs for those who want Sharps Bros. quality without the sharpness. The Meanstreak features a subtle angry



Do you want to stand out from the rest of the AR-15 crowd? For the ultimate in customization, consider adding a Sharps Bros. lower receiver like the (clockwise from top) Warthog, Hellbreaker or The Jack.

eye design, and the new Livewire has clean and straight lines with improved performance features. All Sharps Bros. lower receivers feature integral, enlarged trigger-guards, beveled magazine wells for faster reloads, hardcoat anodized finishes and multi-caliber markings. They will accommodate all mil-spec internal parts, magazines and upper receivers.

The bottom line is that these designs are fun and the ultimate in personalization. In my mind, the ideal would be to combine a Sharps Bros. lower receiver with a custom DuraCoat or Cerakote paint job to truly bring out the aircraft nose art look. The company's tagline is "Exceptional Designs. Exceptional Craftsmanship," and this is not taken lightly. All Sharps Bros. lower receivers are sold exclusively through Spike's Tactical. For more, visit sharpsbros.com or spikestactical.com.



AR RIFLEMAN WEB DIRECTORY

ADVANCED ARMAMENT
advanced-armament.com

AERO PRECISION USA
aeroprecisonusa.com

AMERICAN GUNSMITHING
americangunsmith.com

BARNES AMMO
barnesbullets.com

BARRETT FIREARMS
barret.net

BOYDS GUNSTOCK INDUSTRIES
boydsgunstocks.com

BRAVO COMPANY USA
bravocompanyusa.com

BUSHMASTER
bushmaster.com

DANIEL DEFENSE
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DARK STORM INDUSTRIES
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DEL-TON
del-ton.com

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DPMS
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drdtactical.com

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hornady.com

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luth-ar.com

MAGPUL
magpul.com

MIDWEST INDUSTRIES, INC.
midwestindustries.com

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NIKON
nikonsportoptics.com

PERSONAL DEFENSE WORLD™
Personaldefenseworld.com

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newriflestocks.com

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tactical-life.com

WILSON COMBAT
wilsoncombat.com

WINDHAM WEAPONRY
windhamweaponry.com

CUSTOM 6.5 CREEDMOOR

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IN THE FIELD

The range work completed, it was time to put the new rifle through its paces on a late-season deer hunt. My stand site was familiar; I simply set up on my range bench and waited. A 760-yard strip of rye, Mossy Oak BioLogic and other assorted Mossy Oak beets, bulbs, chickory and clover run along the length of my range. Several 1.5- and 2.5-year-old bucks had received a pass throughout the season, but it was time to continue my work of controlling the doe population. After a short wait, I had a skinny one-horned spike step into my "food plot" at 30 yards. Within a few seconds, a young six-pointer followed. Neither of these bucks was in danger because of their age.

As the sun dropped toward the horizon, a doe fawn stepped into view downrange and looked back over her shoulder. I raised my Leica 1600-B CRF rangefinder and plated the red box squarely on the young doe's side. The readout told me that she stood 522 yards away. A few moments later, a mature doe stepped into the lane and quickly crossed out of view. Her caution eased, the big doe stepped back into view 10 yards closer. I twisted the Accu-Pod slightly and settled the third mil dot just above the doe's midline, right behind her shoulder, as she stood broadside feeding. The trigger broke crisply, launching the 123-grain A-MAX with a suppressed *crack* of a suppressed hypersonic round leaving the barrel. My spotter, my wife Jacqueline, watched through 10X Kowa binoculars as the bullet struck home. The doe bucked her back feet, ran a few steps and tipped over.

Successful at long range on its first hunt, this custom 6.5 Creedmoor rifle is guaranteed to accompany me to the range and field until the round count gets so high that I wear the barrel out. Then, I'll just tear it down, replace the barrel and put this rugged rifle back into service for a few more years.

For More Information

JP ENTERPRISES
jprifles.com; 651-426-9196

MAGPUL
magpul.com; 877-462-4785

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